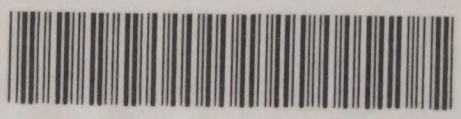
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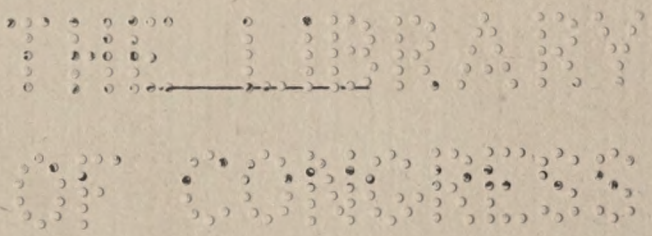


A Child of the Slums

BY

HELEN F. CLARK

With Full-page Illustrations by T. Pym



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A Child of the Slums.

CHAPTER I.

A boy stood looking wistfully at a bread stall. A passing policeman struck him sharply with his club.

"Here, you, get along dere," he cried, as the boy sprang away from him crying with pain.

"Wot yer hit me fer? I ain't doin' not'in'," sobbed the boy.

"You'll fin' out wot I hit yer fer, if ye don't look out," growled the policeman. The boy shrank back still further at the officer's words and brutal scowl. At that moment a girl of ten, his sister, appeared, carrying a beer-pail in her hand.

"Wot did he do to ye, Ted?" she asked.

"He hit me," answered the boy.

"Wot did he do dat fer?"

"I dunno. I didn't do not'in'. I was jus' stan'in' dere."

Tess looked at her brother wonderingly.

"Did ye go into de Mish'ner's Sunday-school yestiddy?" she finally asked.

"Yeh," admitted Ted, slowly.

"Dat's wot he hit ye fer, den," said Tess.

"'Tain't none o' his biz'niss," said the boy, sullenly.

"He hit Paddy Flannigan fer goin' in las' week," argued Tess.

"All de boys went in same as me," said Ted, defiantly.

At that moment a head was thrust from an open window several stories above them, and a woman called angrily:—

"Here, you Tess, w'ere's dat beer? I'll skin ye alive if ye don't get a move on yer."

Tess turned and sped toward the saloon, as fast as her thin legs could carry her. In a moment she reappeared with the frothing

liquor and hurried into the area. Ted followed through the long, damp passage, clinging tightly to his sister's skirts.

"She'll lick ye fer stoppin', Tess. She'll lick ye sure."

"I know it," said Tess, and the tears began to flow over her cheeks.

"Had anyt'ing dis mawnin'?" he whispered, sympathetically.

"No."

"Come down an' I'll give ye somet'in'."

"Wot ye got?" asked Tess, eagerly.

"De Mish'ner give me two apples, an' I saved one fer you."

Tess' eyes shone with pleasure. The beating did not seem so hard to bear if only the hunger gnawing within her might be satisfied.

Up the dark stairway she toiled until she reached her own doorway.

"Got here at last, did ye?" shrieked the irate mother, as she snatched the pail of beer.

"Take that," cried the woman, raining furious blows on the defenceless child. Tess cried out, but her mother raised her foot and sent the child sprawling in the hall.

Ted had discreetly remained below in the third story, and now waited for his sister to crawl down to him. Tess groped her way through the hall, wiping the blood from a cut on her cheek, where the tender flesh had struck on a projecting stair. She smothered her choking sobs as best she could, for the children of drunkards are prone to cry quietly. Taking Ted by the hand, she led him to another tenement which joined a factory in the rear, and in a quiet nook formed by some unused steps leading to the factory's back door, she sat down to devour the apple, her first food in sixteen hours.

"Wot did the Mish'ner say w'en she give ye de apples, Ted?" asked Tess, when a long silence had followed the disappearance of the last scrap of fruit.

"She didn't say not'in'. She jus' asked me did I want some apples."

"Where was she?"

"Goin' into de Mish'n."

"Let's go and see if she's dere now."

"Look out fer de cop," warned Ted.

The children sauntered up the street. Soon they turned down a hall and emerged upon another courtyard. Here they crawled from the rear steps to the roof of a coal-shed, and from this vantage-ground gazed long and earnestly into the Mission. What they saw was a basement room that served as work-room and class-room com-

bined. In one corner was a desk, in another an old-fashioned chest of drawers. In the center of the room stood a table on which lay a bolt of bright blue gingham, surrounded by numerous paper patterns and sewing utensils.

While the children gazed in wonder an inner door opened, and two ladies appeared, one leading a child by the hand.

"Dere's one o' de Dago chillern," said Ted.

"It's Rosie," returned Tess, in an awe-struck whisper. "It's Rosie Corregio. Her wot's next to de priest's school. Golly! Won't she get a lickin'!"

"See de Mish'ner wot's got her. She's givin' her a dress."

Tess was too much amazed to speak. The missionary had opened a drawer in the old fashioned bureau and taken from it a dress of blue gingham, exactly like the bolt of goods on the table. She was now holding it up to the child, as if measuring her. Then through the open window Tess heard her say: —

"Now, Rosa, I will cut out a dress like this for you, and if you will come to the sewing-school this afternoon, we will teach you how to make it, and when it is done, you may have it for your own."

Rosa's eyes danced with delight, but her tongue was awkward in expressing thanks, perhaps because she had so little for which to be thankful in her short life. But the teacher understood her silence. Putting her hand softly on the child's head, she turned the little face up to hers and said, looking wistfully down: —

"Try to get the other girls to come in, will you not, Rosa?"

"Yes," answered the child, and bade the missionary good-by.

"Do dey all get dresses, all wot comes into de school?" whispered Tess to Ted.

"I dunno," answered Ted.

At that moment the missionary, Margaret Rossi, came to the window and saw the children, who were trying to crouch back out of sight.

"Won't you come in, Teddie?" she asked, pleasantly.

Ted made no answer.

"We have a sewing-school this afternoon, little girl. Will you not come? It is held at three o'clock. We shall be glad—"

But Tess waited to hear no more. Dragging her brother with her, she slid down from the roof of the shed, and jumped into the next yard, clearing nearly six feet in her descent.

The missionary turned away with a sigh. She had frightened the children away instead of winning them. Her heart was heavy as she said to herself: "Will I ever win these children?" and she thought sadly of the many months of effort put forth and the meagre results thus far attained.

But Tess and Ted ran as fast as they could go, back to their one safe shelter — the factory steps.

"Will ye go?" asked Ted, when he had recovered his breath.

"No," answered Tess, shortly.

"Maybe she'd give ye a dress."

"I don't want no dress," sniffed Tess; and then began to cry, for she did want the dress with all the strength and passion of her little starved soul.

"I guess the priest wouldn't know it," suggested Ted.

"Yes, he would. He's got eyes all over him, and can see through a house," said Tess.

"I wouldn't care if I was you."

"He hits so hard when he licks ye," said Tess, with the memory of former beatings in her mind.

This argument was unanswerable, and Ted said no more, particularly as he had himself experienced the priestly punishment.

At that moment a group of children rushed into the yard, just out from the parish school.

"Hello, dere, Ted, I got de drop on ye," and Paddy Flannigan triumphantly held up a penny, with which he tacitly invited Ted to gamble with him.

"I ain't got no center," answered Ted.

But Mickey Haley was more fortunate, and Ted and the other boys looked on admiringly while the two played craps. Mickey won the game, whereat Paddy grew angry and rushed upon him with clenched fists. A fight followed, and the boys, shouting and cursing, pounded and kicked one another until Paddy's mother, who lived upstairs, saw that her boy was getting the worst of it, and promptly threw a bucket of water on Mick. The boys then rushed off to find some more convenient locality in which to finish their bout.

Meanwhile the girls, indifferent alike to gambling or fight, had amused themselves by jumping a rope, which Victoria Luigi owned, to the great envy of the others. They were still jumping when Rose Corregio ran in, calling as she ran: —

"Victoria, Miss Ingalls says fer every girl to come to sewing-school. She's waiting fer ye."

"I ain't goin'," said Victoria.

"I'm goin'," said Annie Valliri; and dragging her sister Louisa by the hand, she suited the action to the word.

"Are you goin'?" asked Tess of Agnes Flannigan, Paddy's sister.

"No," said Agnes.

"Oh, come on," urged Maggie Ryan. "See, there goes Maria Costello and all the other girls. And now Victoria is goin' too."

With a little more urging Agnes yielded, but Tess was obdurate, and a moment later she was alone in the courtyard. She sat down on the steps to think, and the pretty blue gingham dress which Rosa was to receive rose persistently before her. She looked down at her own dirty, tattered gown, whose original color had been forgotten, and a sense of shame and mortification seized her. "Rosa will have a nice new dress to wear, and I will have only this," she thought, and the hot tears rolled down her cheeks and splashed on her bare, thin legs. "I'll jus' go see if dey all gets dresses," she said, "maybe nobody else don't get none."

The girls were assembled in the class-room when Tess climbed again to her perch on the coal-shed. All were busy, and looking happier than Tess had ever seen them look before. Some were taking their first unskillful stitches in cardboard and outlining pretty figures thereon. Some were putting together blocks of patchwork, and near the window, oh, mockery of fate! was Agnes Flannigan sewing on a blue gingham dress. Others of the older girls also had these dresses, only some dresses were pink in color and some were pretty plaids. Such evidence of prosperity had never before greeted Tess' vision in all the ten years of her earthly journey. She sobbed bitterly for a time, and then bravely setting her teeth, she at last came to a heroic resolution. Slipping down from her post on the shed, she walked straight to the mission door. Miss Ingalls answered her bold little knock and opened the door. A soiled child, puny and haggard, with uncombed hair and tattered gown, and eyes of deep Irish blue looking pleadingly into her face, was what she saw.

"Please, de priest can beat me every day, but I'll come if ye'll give me a new dress," said the child.

The missionary listened in surprise, but quickly understanding the trouble, she said warmly: —

"You shall have the dress, child; come in."

And then, almost before she knew it, little Tess was sitting by Miss Ingalls' side; the soft, glittering fabric lay shining in her lap, and her awkward fingers were plying a needle in its folds. Never before in all her life had Tess been so content. The quiet hour seemed like heaven to her. No one swore, no one struck her. There was no fighting, and, strangest of all, every woman spoke kindly and gently to her. Margaret Rossi came and laid her hand on the tangled head and said: —

"Is not this the little girl whom I saw on the roof this morning?"

Tess looked ashamed.

"I am so glad you came," continued the teacher, kindly. "You will be one of our friends now, will you not?"

"Yes," said Tess, unconsciously registering a vow in her childish heart which she kept forever.

When the sewing hour was over, a pretty bag was given to Tess, on which some one wrote her name, and in this her work was carefully placed to wait until the next sewing day. After this, the children sang for a long time, and then listened to a story of Jesus, which Tess thought was the most beautiful she had ever heard. When the last song was sung, and the sun was beginning to set over the tall house-tops, the children bade their teachers good-by, and passed out into the street.

As Tess reached the curbstone, she looked back and heaved a long sigh.

"I didn't know it was like that," she said.

Ted stood near by, watching her.

"Did ye go in?" he asked.

Tess turned round and nodded. "It's jus' like heaven," she said. "An' she gave me a dress."

"Oh!" said Ted, appreciatively.

The two children now turned their steps homeward. Their mother was cooking supper when they entered. She was a frowsled, dirty woman, and possessed of a sharp tongue and hot temper. She was feared by her neighbors as well as by her children. She was not over forty years of age, and would have been handsome had she been clean and neatly dressed. Her husband sat at one side of the table, dozing. He, too, was a drunkard, although, unlike his wife, he was not quarrelsome when under the influence of liquor. His younger children loved him, and, when sober, he was very kind and affectionate to them.

Patrick and Bridget Terry had started out in life very well. Both were children of well-to-do parents. Patrick had received rather more education than falls to the lot of the average child. He had graduated from the city high school, and then had spent one year in college. His parents were people of some culture and refinement, but, most unhappily for Patrick, they died when he was on the verge of manhood. For several years after his marriage Patrick earned a comfortable living for his family as an expert book keeper.

His relatives and friends were in the habit of using liquor, and Patrick followed in their footsteps in this regard. With him the appetite developed rapidly, and he soon lost all control of himself. Then came disgrace, attempts at reformation, constant failure, and finally the loss of position, friends, and self-respect. Things went from bad to worse, until at the time of the opening of this story,

Bridget and he had sunk almost as low in the social scale as it was possible to go. They were abjectly poor, starving their bodies to quench the dreadful thirst that continually consumed them. Their children were clothed in rags, and scarcely ever knew what it was to be satisfied with food. Dennis, the oldest son, was the only member of the family who earned regular wages. He was learning to mix drinks and tend bar in McGorge's saloon. This boy was Bridget's glory, and, whether drunk or sober, she was never tired of lauding her son Dennis. He sometimes supplied them with food, although his tender mercies in this direction were not to be relied upon. But since he was well dressed — for that locality, — and wore a flashing red tie and a Rhine-stone in his shirt front, his mother considered him an especial credit to his family. In character he was a "ward politician" in embryo. Of intrigue he already knew more than most men do at the end of a lifetime. He was an expert in profanity, and possessed a tongue equally glib at telling witty stories or lying. Although only sixteen years old, he had already been of use to the real politicians who frequented the saloon.

To-day Dennis had given his mother a few cents and a quart of beer, and, having the beer, she had spent the money in providing a supper for her family. Besides the customary bread and tea, she had purchased chuck-steak and onions, and they were now frying over two cents' worth of wood. Ted and Tess looked at each other with mutual congratulations in their eyes, and sat down on the edge of the old lounge, expectantly waiting with watering mouths.

"Look wot your good brother's been givin' ye," said Bridget, pointing to the frying-pan. "When will ye be earnin' any money, I'd like to know, and buyin' yer poor, deservin' moder somet'in' to eat? Dennis is me good boy, Dennis is.

"Come, now, sit up an' eat wot yer good Dennis hes give ye," and she put the frying-pan in the middle of the table, and wakened her husband with a kick.

They all gathered round it, and ate as famishing people eat. Tess' eyes sparkled. The memory of the pretty dress folded away in a certain bright bag marked with her name, and this good supper, made a combination not soon to be forgotten. When the meal was finished, the two children again sought the streets, far happier than was their wont.

CHAPTER II.

Bay City was one of the most beautiful cities on the Atlantic coast. It was situated on the neck of a deep bay, and very early in its existence it became renowned as a shipping port.

The banks of the bay were steep and rocky until within two miles of its head, and hence it only afforded about four miles of coast which was adapted for the building of wharves. But north of the city a very broad, deep river ran from northwest to southeast, circling the rocky coasts of the bay, and entering the ocean about twenty miles below them.

At Bay City this river was but three miles from the head of the bay, and directly parallel with it. In order to give the rapidly growing city greater wharfage room, it was proposed to build a canal from the river to the head of the bay. This, it was intended, should be deep enough to allow ships to pass through it to the river, and up the river as far as it was navigable.

By this arrangement the business houses could spread inland as far as they chose, and yet be within reach of the great shipping interests.

It was decided by popular vote to build the canal, and during the ensuing year the contracts for the digging and masonry, and also for the building of bridges, etc., were to be awarded to the lowest bidder.

The year of which this story treats was the time of a municipal election, when a new mayor, alderman, and lesser officials were to be chosen. In the hands of these new officers, therefore, would be the awarding of these contracts.

Every politician was profoundly stirred. Even a presidential election was of less importance to them, because it did not give them the same chance to distribute favors to local workers Here was a rare opportunity to cement political alliances for years to come, by the distribution of fat offices under these contracts to faithful henchmen in the political ranks. For of course it would be a politician who secured the contracts, and every man who had worked for the particular party into whose hands fell the awarding of these contracts, would expect to have a hand in the assignment of positions under them. Thus many old scores would be paid, and countless new allies would be made for future campaigns.

For many years a group of men called the Falen Club had held autocratic sway over the politics of the city. By means of fraudulent votes at elections, and by every species of intimidation during the rest of the year, they gained, and afterwards held, their power.

In the meantime, as was natural under a corrupt government, vice flourished without restriction, and the city was fast acquiring a most unsavory reputation abroad, notwithstanding her educational advantages and natural beauties.

The Falen Club and the party it represented found their greatest strength on election day among the lowest classes. The city, being a port of entry, numbered a large population of immigrants. In certain districts these immigrants had congregated until the population was as dense as in some of the renowned heathen cities of the Orient. Their tenements were beginning to encroach upon the old family homesteads, places of historic interest, not only to the city, but to the country at large, since some of them had been associated with events of the national history.

Their multitudes of tenants, unclean, impure, and ignorant, threatened to overwhelm the city with their own degradation and corruption, for it was the votes of these foreigners, naturalized by fraud, and the children of these foreigners, who had attended no school but the parochial school, and who were still innocent of the most rudimentary knowledge of our principles of government, that kept the Falenites in power.

Such a class of people are fallow ground for demagogues of the Falenitish order, and the politicians never failed to avail themselves of the ignorance and credulity of these people. But their greatest advantage lay in the fact that these immigrants were almost wholly from Roman Catholic countries, and therefore habituated to following, *en masse*, in the wake of their religious leaders. What their priests commanded, they did. To secure their votes, therefore, it was only necessary to make an alliance with the Romish powers. This the Falenites did at the very beginning of their career, and by their own characteristic methods. In this endeavor to hold the Roman clergy it was imperatively necessary to throw the choicest bits of patronage in their way, and it is said in the inner circles that even the Archbishop himself was not averse to spoiling the Philistines in this manner.

On the other hand, the opposing party represented the middle classes and the wealthy business and professional men. This was unquestionably the intelligent party, and was almost wholly Protestant. They were also Americans, most of them being the descendants of a long line of American-born ancestors.

But in a city so largely peopled by immigrants and the children of immigrants, it was not strange that this class, in itself vastly more intelligent and powerful, should be outnumbered at the polls, and overcome by the conscienceless intrigues of corrupt politicians.

Thus it was that the political warfare of Bay City gradually assumed the form of Romanist against Protestant, and foreigner against American. It was, and had been for a quarter of a century, darkness fighting against light, ignorance against intelligence, corruption against purity in administration, vice against righteousness. The contest had grown more and more bitter as the years rolled on. Election after election passed, and still the Falenites and their party held sway. Vice was rampant, and every department of the municipal government seemed rotten to the core.

Then came the question of the enlargement of the wharfage facilities, and the proposed canal, which should add so much to the commerce and power of the city, was ordered by an enthusiastic popular vote. It was unquestionably the thing to do, but the defeated middle classes looked with consternation and growing dismay at the prospect of so much added power passing into the hands of the Falenites.

Gradually this feeling crystallized into the most vigorous measures to prevent it. The whole city was stirred,—on the one hand by those who wished to maintain their power, and on the other hand by those who longed to shake off the galling yoke of Falenite dominion, and secure an honest government that should purify the city.

Clubs were formed in every district and division of a district, and never before, in all the eventful history of historic Bay City, had such a warfare been waged.

We have not to deal with the whole of that campaign, but only such a portion of it as affects Ward B, where lived our little Tess and her friends.

This ward represented, in sharp contrast, the two extremes of the city's inhabitants. The ward was about half a mile long, and a third of a mile broad. It was divided almost in half by a street called Broad Place, which ran from east to west. In the northern half of this section the streets were wide avenues, shaded by the interlocking branches of great trees. In the southern half the streets were narrow, and the trees had been cut down, or had died from the mutilations of boys and loafers.

In the northern half were beautiful old homes, some of quaint, Dutch style, others, more in keeping with American taste, were built after the fashion of the New England colonists. Each of these was surrounded by its own modest garden, and overhung with the branches of century-old trees.

In the southern half the old homes had been torn down, and huge tenements stood in their places. The old gardens had been forgotten, or covered over, such narrow spaces as had been left of them, with cobblestones or flag pavements.

In the northern half lived the happy, intelligent, prosperous Americans, who pointed with reverent pride to ancestors whose names are inscribed on our country's Constitution, or who had filled holy graves at Lexington or Bunker Hill. Or they themselves, if they would, could show you the scars of battle received when striking the heroic blows that freed our land from the shame of slavery.

In the southern half were new-comers, men and women born under another sky, aliens to our government, strangers to our history, and with neither sympathy nor regard for those great principles which stir American patriotism to the depths. There were Italians, Spaniards, Russians, Germans, Irishmen, even a few Turks, who could neither read nor write; who counted their years — or maybe months — of residence among us, on their fingers; who were poor and given to drink and crime; who were swayed by their superstitions, and governed by their fears; who knew no authority but that of the Pope, and heeded no law but that of his emissary, the priest.

Such was the contrast, sharp and cruel, between the two halves of this ward; and here was fought, in miniature, the battle which must sooner or later be waged in every part of this land where ignorance, superstition, and blind allegiance to a religious hierarchy, shall oppose the free institutions of this government.

One of the finest places in Ward B was the Rossi home, on Washington Avenue. It was a newer place than many of the others, and was an excellent specimen of colonial architecture. It occupied about one-quarter of the block, and its grassy lawn, over-running vines, and fragrant rose-hedges, made it a most delightful spot in summer.

Frank Rossi was the son of Rossi, the violinist, renowned as one of the greatest musicians of his generation. The elder Rossi was an Italian by birth, and was so poor in his early childhood that he played his violin in the streets of Rome for a scanty subsistence. Hearing of the prosperity of his countrymen in America, young Rossi worked his passage on shipboard, and came to Bay City. Here a wealthy gentleman heard the little waif scraping his fiddle in the street, and was surprised at the genius even then evident. He took the boy to his home and educated him, and the homeless lad became not only a musician who held multitudes spell-bound, but, better still, a God-fearing and patriotic citizen.

He married a New England girl, Ruth Howell, and Frank Rossi was the son of this marriage. Both the elder Rossi and his wife were now dead, and the son, who had grown to manhood, inherited the beautiful old home and his father's generous fortune. Young Rossi also inherited his father's musical temperament, and could have equalled him, probably, in a public career, had he chosen to do so. But with his father's genius he mingled his mother's stern conscientiousness and sense of duty. From boyhood he had watched the gradual influx of foreigners into the ward, and when he saw among them those thousands of his father's race, his impressionable young heart was deeply stirred.

Since he was thoroughly American and Protestant in his own sentiments, he regarded with the utmost pity those poor dupes of the priests as they struggled to rise from the superstition and degradation that bound them. A vague purpose to help them had formed in his mind when he was yet a lad, and it had grown with his growth, and developed as he developed, until, when he at last stood at the threshold of his bright young manhood, and came to the point of decision between art and duty, he unwaveringly chose the latter.

When about thirty years old he opened and fitted a Mission with his own means at Washington Corners, and in company with his devoted young wife, Margaret Leland Rossi, he faced the threats of criminals and bigoted papists, and bravely put into operation his long-cherished plans for the uplifting of these people.

He placed a large organ in the Mission, and here he played daily, usually at sundown, when the men had finished their day's work. He drew very many people to the Mission by the very beauty of his harmonies, while others, weary and heartsick, not daring to come in for fear of the priests' displeasure, gathered in the streets or the rear courtyards to listen, and in listening were comforted.

Associated with him in this effort was his cousin, Howell Madison, a young man of his own age. Rossi and Madison had been playmates from childhood, and were like brothers in their affection for each other. Their mothers were sisters, and they had lived on the same avenue, but a few blocks apart. The family intercourse was constant. The boys were educated together, and their interests and pursuits had been identical, and each, at manhood, chose the loftiest task of which he knew.

Madison devoted himself to the ministry, and early became a most acceptable and godly pastor in a neighboring city. But when Rossi opened his Mission among the poor foreigners, Madison immediately resigned his lucrative and honorable position, and joined

his cousin in his labor of love. Madison was not rich, as was Rossi, possessing only a modest income of his own. Upon leaving his pastorate, he returned to his home in Ward B, and the pleasure of being again with his mother compensated him somewhat for the difficulties and trials of his new work.

Madison was tall and strongly built, a man of dignity and of commanding presence. In looking at him the mind unconsciously travelled back to the days of the heroic Puritan fathers, and saw in him the fullness of them all.

Rossi was of medium height, lithe and agile, but the firmness of his demeanor was softened by its gracefulness. Rossi had his father's face, oval and delicate, with the same large, dark, glowing, Italian eyes. He was the artist even in appearance, a man of whom girls dreamed, and whom even men loved.

Madison was not married, but Rossi had married soon after leaving college. Madison's home had been his grandfather's before him, and was so quaint and quiet a place that it seemed as if a Sabbath calm dwelt perpetually there. The towering trees of the garden enfolded the old-fashioned house with their spreading, swaying branches, as if to protect it forever from the rude jostling of the world about their doors.

Mrs. Madison, the mother of Howell, was now aged and feeble. Her hair was snow white, but her face was so peaceful and bright with placid joy that she seemed to have already caught the light from the Eternal City and to be reflecting it on those about her. So restful was their quiet home that even strangers esteemed it a privilege to spend a little time there.

Rossi and Madison were keenly alive to the seriousness of the political situation, and knew that upon their own ward and the others which, like it, were full of foreigners, would depend the result of the approaching election. Hence, the question of turning the foreigners' votes to the side of pure government was continually in their minds.

In the early summer, therefore, Rossi sent a call to all of the best men of his neighborhood to meet at his house on a certain evening to discuss measures for opposing the Falenites. The invitation met with a hearty response, and his parlors and halls were filled to overflowing with guests.

Major William Livingstone was called to preside over the meeting and to make the first speech of the evening. He said: —

"Friends, it is with the utmost concern that I look at the present status of our municipal government. I need not point out to you its corruption, or dwell upon the scandal it has made in the eyes of the

world. You know all this as well as I know it, and already the blush of shame has mantled your cheeks at the knowledge. But I would ask you to consider some plan by which we may overthrow this disgraceful ring which has so long stigmatized us, and to enter at once and boldly upon some definite action.

"I do not know that we can do better than to follow the example of other wards and organize ourselves into a club, and then spend our strength and put forth our very best endeavor to crush this corrupt power that has so long ruled us. It is my humble belief that we need to act to night, rather than to make set speeches. I will therefore curtail my remarks, and throw open the question of organization for your full and free discussion."

"Let us hear from Rossi," suggested Walter Villars.

"Yes!" "Yes!" "Rossi!" assented the others.

Rossi rose from his place and spoke at first gravely, and then with the kindling enthusiasm which was characteristic of him: —

"Gentlemen, I am most heartily in accord with Major Livingstone's remark that 'we need to act to-night rather than to make set speeches.' This is certainly a time when actions will speak louder, and their sound travel farther, than all the words which we can utter. The time for words has past. Nothing but *action* should be our watchword now, and such action as shall rouse every man in this city, and force him to vote intelligently and honestly.

"We have enough men in this ward alone to turn the scale in an election, if we can but persuade them to vote as honest men should vote; and I believe that it is possible to do this. I am aware that most of you have labored earnestly in former campaigns in the interest of pure government, but it seems to me that you have not worked in the right place. You did your electioneering in the wrong end of the ward. You expended your efforts on the northern half of this ward, uniting together the better elements, but permitting the worse elements of the southern half to outnumber you. Now I propose that we work this year at the other end of the ward. Just to show you how the matter stands relatively, let me give you some figures from the reports of our last census, taken about four months ago.

"We have a total population in Ward B of 20795. Of this number 11,905 are foreign born, while 7,839 are the children of foreigners. Only 1,051 persons, therefore, out of this whole ward, including women and children, are Americans of the second generation."

Exclamations of surprise and chagrin were heard from every part of the audience.

"Thus you see that five-ninths of our population are aliens, a little more than two-sevenths are the children of those who were aliens twenty or thirty years ago, and only one-twentieth are really genuine Americans who are entitled to our confidence as such.*

"But let us look at the voting population of Ward B. Among the native Americans we have 1,924 voters, of whom about fifteen hundred are Roman Catholics, the majority of whom have heretofore voted with the Falenites. Of the foreigners, 1,397 have been naturalized, and are now voters. These are also under the dominion of the priests, who use their votes to secure the power of the ring. Now, gentlemen, if we are to succeed in the coming election, we must carry our present warfare directly into the camp of the enemy, and win over the votes of the Catholic Americans and of these foreigners. I know that it is a bold thing to attempt, and a difficult feat to accomplish. No one knows better than I do the greatness of the task, nor how hard it will be to break the power which the priests have over these ignorant voters, but I believe that if we are to see the government of this city purified, it must be done in this way. I am sure that it can be done, and that it is incumbent upon you and I as free citizens of this Republic, who are co-responsible for the maintenance of the purity of its institutions, to see that it is done."

A burst of applause greeted the young speaker's stirring words, and then Dr. Starr took the floor.

"Our young friend is right, gentlemen," he said. "If we are to win in this campaign we must now resort to the most aggressive measures. As he says, we must carry the battle into the enemy's camp. Will you therefore permit me to move that we form a Pure

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* In the Sixth Ward of New York City the total population was given by the United States census in 1890 as 23,119. Of this number only 1,161 whites were born of American-born parents; of 8,472 persons one or both parents were foreign-born, and 13,030 persons were themselves born in foreign countries. There were, therefore, less than twelve hundred persons in the ward who were Americans of the second generation (this did not include the colored residents of native birth), against more than twenty-one thousand who were foreigners and the children of foreigners. In the Tenth Ward of that city the total population was 57,596 Of this number 1,992 were born of native parents, while of 18,048 one or both parents were foreign born, and 37,382 persons were themselves born abroad. Here the proportion of Americans of the second generation is even sma ler, being only about one-twenty-ninth of the total population, while those born of foreign-born parents number more than two-sevenths, and the foreign-born are more than three-fifths of the whole. In the Sixth Ward Americans of the second generation number one-twentieth of the whole, five-ninths are foreign-born, and nearly three-eighths are children of foreign-born parents. Thus the condition claimed for Ward B is less than is actually true of corresponding districts in an existing city.

Government Club in this ward, and that the chair appoint a committee to nominate officers and draw up the necessary by-laws."

But before this action could be taken, Killaen von Houton was seen to rise, and all waited for him to speak. He said:—

"I sympathize heartily with what Mr. Rossi says, and believe that he does appreciate very largely the difficulties of an attempt to win over the foreigners who have heretofore voted as their priests directed. But does he realize all that such a step may mean? We all know the bitterness of Roman Catholic hatred, and how they have already threatened and persecuted Mr. Rossi because of his mission in their neighborhood. Will not this attempt to convert them politically rouse their animosity still more? Threats have been made already against the lives of any who may try to interfere with the control which their religious leaders have over these masses when at the polls. It seems to me that we shall all take our lives in our hands if we work among them as aggressively as it is now proposed that we shall, and that Mr. Rossi will be in especial danger."

Rossi sprang to his feet, his eyes sparkling.

"If it takes my life to win this cause I am more than willing to give it," he said. "I ask no more honorable end. And if it should require the sacrifice of others, I am sure that there are those in this room to-night who will as willingly yield up theirs. Are we not the sons of patriots — the children of those who died to buy freedom for this land? Did not our fathers brave the bullet and the bayonet to break from off our necks the yoke of English tyranny? Gentlemen, we stand on historic ground. Was not this avenue named for the commander who once marshalled his army upon it? Did not these streets once run with patriots' blood? Did not the walls of these honored homes which we so proudly inherit ring with the sound of clashing steel, and tremble at the cannon's roar? Shall we, then, sons of freemen as we are, submit to the encroachings of an enemy more terrible than ever England was, and to the intrigues of foes who are bitterer than death itself?

"Gentlemen, I believe that here in this city, in this very ward, if you will, we see to-day but the beginning of a struggle which is coming to this nation, which stands even now dimly outlined against our horizon,—a struggle for supremacy between the Roman Catholic hierarchy on one hand, working through the vast masses which it controls, and the free-born American people on the other. The people of this country, having wrested their independence from England's grasp, are to-day so sure of their liberties that they have gone to sleep. They have seen no enemy, and they fear none. And so

they sleep, and sleep, and sleep, waking for a moment only to slumber again, while this foe, this deadly, venomous foe of *Romanism in politics*, is growing, and taking shape, and forming itself, and gathering momentum, ready to spring at the throat of this couchant, sleeping lioness, and before she can wake and shake herself free, to bind and overpower her forever.

"I ask, brother Americans, shall we submit to this foe, or shall we arouse ourselves, and, though it cost innumerable lives, thrust back forever this enemy that is even now upon us? Do not think that I over-estimate our danger, but come up and look this evil in the face. Measure its magnitude. Mark its malignant nature. Surely he who looks must perceive its menace. I warrant you, if he comprehends it fully, he will start away in horror, and cry with me, Arouse! Arouse! Give it battle,—such battle as shall know no end until it lies dead upon the field, never to rise again!"

A hush of awe had fallen upon the assembly as he spoke. Their emotions were too deep for applause, but Rufus Wendell voiced the feelings of all when he rose and said, in tones vibrant with suppressed excitement: —

"Men and brothers, we do not come of a race that will easily permit our hard-earned freedom to be torn from us, neither will we allow an ecclesiastic, who has usurped kingly powers, to dictate to this government what we shall do, or who shall be our rulers. These aliens who have come among us are not of themselves our foes, but their Pope and their priests, when they attempt to interfere with their adherents' use of our franchise, are our enemies. When they threaten our public schools, and teach men that governments and all civil authorities are subservient to the Church of Rome, when they command men to refuse obedience to the laws of the country in which they reside when those laws do not favor or please the Pope or his vicegerents, then do these ecclesiastics become our bitter foes. It is for the deliverance of these foreigners themselves from their slavery to the priesthood, and to help them to develop their own reasoning powers and independence, and to be fit for the privilege of citizenship among us, as well as for the preservation of our own freedom and blood-bought institutions, that we take up this battle. Let us not hesitate, whatever may be the power and strength of our enemy. Let us not count the cost, whatever it may be. Even though the great body of our citizens be like a sleeping lioness, let us awake and arouse them, until this danger shall be forever overcome."

"Yes!" "Yes!" "Hear!" "Hear!" cried earnest voices from

every part of the room. Then Caldwell Hollis arose and requested that the question of organization be put to vote.

This was done amid much enthusiasm, and when the meeting closed the club had been duly organized. Rossi was unanimously chosen president, while Walter Villars, Van Houton, Dr. Starr, and others filled its various offices, and formed its committees.

An empty store at Washington Corners, just opposite the Mission, was rented and fitted up as the club's headquarters, and plans for future meetings, speeches, and demonstrations, were liberally outlined.

CHAPTER III.

Tess sat on the steps leading up to the Mission doorway, and Agnes Flannigan sat beside her.

"Does de priest know yer goin' to de Mish'ner's Sunday-school?" asked Agnes.

"Naw," said Tess. "Does he know you're a-goin'?"

"Naw," said Agnes. "Does yer ma know?"

"Naw, mine don't. Does yours?" asked Tess, in return.

"Naw," answered Agnes.

"Dassent ye tell?" asked Tess.

"Naw," said Agnes, with emphasis.

"I don't care if dey does knows it, I'm a-goin'," answered Tess, defiantly.

"I ain't, not if de priest hits me."

"I don't care fer no hits," said Tess again. "De Dago girls all goes, an' de priest he don't say not'in' to dem."

"Paulo Colombo's mad wid Rosie Corregio, an' he's goin' to tell de priest dat all de Dago girls goes in."

Tess grew silent and afraid.

"Mis' Rossi give de Dago girl wot lives by Mis' Luigi a hat, an' yistiddy she give Louisa Valliri some shoes. I'm a-goin' to ast her fer some shoes, too. Mine ain't no good any more," and Agnes looked down at her worn shoes regretfully.

"Wot ye want ter ast fer shoes fer?" said Tess, scornfully. "Yer father's workin'."

"I don't care if he is. If Mis' Rossi kin give to de Dago girls, she kin give to me," was Agnes' sullen reply. "Anyhow, I ain't goin' no more, not if de priest gets on to it; are you?"

"Yeh," said Tess, staunchly, but her eyes filled with tears, for she dreaded the beatings sorely.

"Father O'Hara's jus' waitin' to git somet'in' on ye, 'cause he's mad at ye fer missin' yer prayers yistiddy."

"I couldn't help it. I had to go fer de beer. My ma whipped me 'cause he keeped me in at noon to say de prayers, an' I didn't git no beer fer her. An' she licked me fer it. An' I was too late fer de prayers w'en I got back;" and the bitter tears fell over her cheeks at the remembrance of the cruel blows she had so lately received.

Just then Rossi finished his music. The last soft notes died away on the evening air, and he came down from the gallery and stood in the Mission doorway. He saw the tears on Tess' face.

"What is the matter, Tessie?" he asked, kindly, looking down at the soiled cheeks and brimming eyes.

But Tess was too much ashamed to answer.

"Why are you crying?" he asked again, laying his hand gently on her head, for of all the children who came to the Mission, Tess' sad little face, with its beseeching Irish-blue eyes, had appealed most strongly to him.

Agnes was more bold, and now answered for her.

"She's afraid de priest'll lick her fer comin' to de Mission."

"Is that so, Tessie?" he asked.

Tess nodded, rubbing the tears from her eyes with a strip of her tattered dress.

"Is your father a Catholic?" asked Rossi.

"Yeh," said Tess.

"Her fader ain't no good; he drinks," volunteered Agnes.

"Where is your father, Tessie? Where do you live?"

"Dad's over dere," said Tess, pointing to a group of men across the street, who had gathered to hear Rossi's playing. "He's de one wid de straw hat on. We lives down in de nex' block."

"Is that your father? Why, he was in the Mission last night."

Tess looked up in surprise, and a gleam of hope came into her eyes. If her father went to the Mission, surely he would not forbid her to go.

"I will try to persuade him to come regularly. If he will only reform, surely he can make it possible for you to come here without the fear of being punished."

"Dat ain't got not'in' to do wid de priest. He don't care fer nobody's fader," sniffed Agnes, contemptuously.

"Do you attend the Catholic day school?" asked Rossi, looking at Agnes curiously.

"Yeh. We all does. We all's Cat'olics," and she gazed sternly across at her church.

"Why do you not go to the public school?" said Rossi, again addressing Tess.

"De priest won't let ye," said Tess. "We ain't none of us darst to go to de public school."

"What do you study at your school?"

"We don't study not'in'—only says de prayers."

"Yeh," said Agnes, correcting her, "we do. We learns de catechism."

"But do you not study reading and writing and arithmetic and geography?"

Tess stared at him blankly.

"We spells," said Agnes. "An' once Micky Healy he did de tables."

"But you must surely study something beside spelling," said Rossi. "What do you do when you first go into the room?"

"We prays an' makes de sign," said Tess.

"An' kisses de floor," said Agnes.

"What do you do next?"

"Den de sister hears de catechism."

"An' de priest raps us wid de ruler w'en we don't say it right," supplemented Tess.

At that moment Victoria Luigi ran toward them.

"Ye'd better get away from dere. De big priest's a-comin'," she whispered.

Both girls sprang to their feet and fled precipitately.

Rossi also heard the whispered warning and now turned round to look at the black-robed clergyman of the Church of Rome, who was crossing from the parish house to the church, which occupied an opposite corner, and was by far the most conspicuous building on the small square.

Father O'Hara was not the regular priest in charge of the parish. The congregation was made up principally of Italians, and an Italian priest, Father Arroll, was the pastor. But O'Hara had been sent to the parish a few months before, ostensibly to assist Arroll, but really, as local politicians averred, to keep the Irish Catholics of the ward strictly within Falenite lines.

As a priest of somewhat higher standing than Arrol, he had been received with great honor, and the whole Catholic community had been filled with awe at his presence. They were now punctual in attendance at mass, and offerings for the church had to be forthcoming whether or not there was bread or clothing in their houses for themselves or their little ones.

O'Hara was a large man, both tall and portly. His manner was assuming and authoritative. Personally he was not attractive, and you felt instinctively that he was a dangerous man to oppose. His

clean-shaven face revealed lines about the mouth which seemed to portray a disposition at once relentless and cruel. But perhaps I misjudge him. I hope he was a better man than certain expressions of his countenance seemed to indicate. His hair and heavy brows were black, and his eyes were a cold, piercing gray.

Rossi looked at him critically and thought: "You are a hard man to fight, about as hard as his Satanic majesty himself, I should suppose. But we shall see who will win in this fight after all, you or I." After this soliloquy he also crossed the square, and going to the club-rooms, he drew a bunch of keys from his pocket and entered.

A few moments later the row of leaden letters over the door, which were scarcely distinguishable in the day-time, suddenly gleamed out in all the brilliancy of electric lights.

Ted and his companions, Paulo Colombo, Tony Costello, Pietro Borosini, and Mickey Haley, were playing in the street in front of the building when it happened.

"Wot's dat?" cried Ted in amazement, pointing to the flaming letters.

The boys stared in undisguised admiration at the beautiful lights, but since neither of them could read, no one ventured an explanation.

"W'ere's dat boy wot lives over on Briscoe Street? He kin read it,—de one wot goes to de public school," said Tony Costello.

"I'll go get him," said Pietro, darting down the street. Paulo followed close behind.

"Wot's de Mish'ner goin' to do now?" said Tony, as Rossi came to the door and hung a banner on either side of it.

"I dunno," said Mickey.

"Dere comes de gent wot lives on Hollis Street. I seed 'im before. His name's Hollis, too," said Ted.

"Dere's anodder feller, too. Golly! See de high hat," said Mickey.

"Dat's de man wot drives de tandem," said Tony. "His name's Won Nouton. I been past his house, and see his stable. He's got de lots o' 'osses. W'en I'm growed up I'm goin' to be a 'Merican like 'im an' drive de 'osses."

"Who's dat odder feller wot's comin' now? I never seed 'im afore," said Mickey.

"I dunno," Ted replied.

"Oh, I know," said Tony. "He's de gent wot rides de two-wheels."

"Dem's bicycles," said Mickey, scornfully.

Soon Pietro and Paulo returned, bringing George Duane with them. George was one of the very few boys in the locality whose parents were Americans. His mother was a widow, who found self-support in a small town very difficult. She had removed to the city in the hope of securing steady work, but she had not bettered her condition, and was now too poor to return. George still remembered the woods and green fields and happy out-door life of the country village, and was never weary of talking about it to his playmates. This, and the fact that he could read easily in English, and also attended the public school, caused him to be known throughout the colony as the "American boy." On this account he was accorded no little prestige among the other children, and was frequently made the arbiter of their petty difficulties. The boys now appealed to him to read the sign glowing so brightly opposite them.

"That?" said George. "Why, that's the Pure Government Club. Don't you know what that is? Why, that means that all the bosses of this country are going to do the square thing and no fooling. That's what that means."

The boys gazed at the sign with respectful awe.

"Wot's de t'ings by de door dere?" asked Paulo.

"The one on this side says, 'Government for the people and by the people.'"

"Wot's dat?" asked Pietro.

"That means,—that means,—why, that means that everybody's got to vote and tell the bosses what to do."

Each boy suddenly straightened up. Was he not one of the company called "everybody?"

"Wot's de odder one?" asked Mickey.

"That one says, 'A free ballot means free voters.'"

The boys waited expectantly while George continued to gaze at the banner, but this was too much for even his enlightenment. Just then Howell Madison approached the Mission steps. George saw him and called:—

"Hey there, Mr. Madison, what does that there banner mean, the one on the right side of the door, about free ballots?"

Madison came over to the boys, and carefully explained the sentiment to them, ending by saying:—

"Every man has a right to vote as he pleases, and no one else has a right to force him to vote in any other way."

"That's so," said George, with enthusiasm. "When I can vote I tell you I won't let anybody boss me. I'll just do as I please."

"So will I," echoed Ted.

"Me, too," said Mickey Haley.

"Wot's goin' on over dere, Mr. Madison?" asked Paulo, pointing to the club-rooms.

"That is the meeting room of a political club," said Madison. "Some gentlemen are to make speeches to-night in the square. The brass band will soon be here, and you will hear some martial music."

"Oh, golly! Ain't dat fine?" said Mickey.

"Kin we go in?" asked Paulo.

"Certainly, you may go in the club rooms, but the band is to play on the street. Here it comes now."

With shouts of joy the boys ran off to meet the approaching wagon, and to secure the first places in the crowd that now quickly assembled. The band played several stirring melodies. In the meantime someone lowered an electric lantern from the top of the Mission building, directly over the square, and it now threw a brilliant light over the entire space. The people flocked from the surrounding streets until the little square was packed with a dense crowd.

When the music ceased, Rossi, Villars, Wendell, and Von Houton mounted the wagon and addressed the multitude. Villars spoke first in the English language, but when he had finished, Rossi stepped forward and addressed the foreigners in their native tongue, the Italian. A murmur of pleasure ran through the audience at the sound of their mother tongue, and then they listened with the closest attention. When he finished, after half an hour's rapid talk, it was evident that he had made a profound impression, and certainly some men were won that night to the cause of pure government who never turned back from it.

The other men spoke briefly, then the band played again, and the meeting broke up quietly and decorously. Soon after the lights were put out in the club-rooms, and the workers returned home, well satisfied with their first night's work.

But in the morning their two banners, hanging on either side of the doorway, were torn to shreds.

Unknown to the valiant leaders, the meeting had other auditors than those who appeared in the square. Father Arroll and Father O'Hara had watched the assemblage from the windows of their study in the second story of the church. From their point of vantage the addresses of the speakers were easily heard, and the two ecclesiastics did not miss a word of what was said. As O'Hara listened he drew down his beetling black brows into a scowl which boded no particular good to the elicitors thereof. He was not blessing the Pure Government Club, and as the meeting progressed,

I doubt if the prayers he uttered were to be found in the established litany of the church. Be that as it may, when the meeting had closed, the reverend father, with characteristic zeal, set himself to bring about the conditions prescribed by his anathemas in the shortest possible space of time.

Had he had his own way entirely, no doubt all those gentlemen from the upper part of Ward B would have been consigned to the very depths of the earth's interior before the sun rose, and would not have been present in the morning to defy his boasted authority, and to complicate his well-devised schemes for the political and spiritual aggrandizement of the church in general, and of its devoted servant, Father O'Hara, in particular. But unfortunately, in some details he could not have his own way. He therefore realized his warmest wishes for them above ground as nearly as possible.

His first manœuvre was to send an account of the meeting, prepared by himself, to the newspapers. In this good cause he called in his faithful henchman, Martin Riley.

"Well, me good brother Riley," said he, "we've got some work to do now to stamp out those blustering blatherskites who think they can oppose the holy church and saddle their politics on us. But we'll show 'em a trick or two. Take that now, that's a nice little notice that I've writ for 'em, that'll do 'em good,—by the holy saints it will,—take that to the *Daily Chronicler*, and this other I've writ, that's as much like it as two peas in a pod,—and by the mouth of two witnesses shall all things be established—take to the *Morning Newsmonger*. Tell them both that the good Father O'Hara, appointed by His Grace the Archbishop to assist the Rev. Father Arroll in the large and flourishing parish of the Immaculate Virgin, will vouch for the truth of 'em. Tell 'em he saw and heard it from his own window, and Father Arroll with him."

Then Riley departed, and O'Hara leaned back in his chair and opened wide the neck of his priestly robe, and lifted his cunning face, and laughed, loud and long, until the tears rolled down his cheeks, and his fat sides ached with their shaking. And Arroll laughed with him, and then sent for wine, and they drank deeply, and continued long at their potations, and mutually blessed themselves for their wit and adroitness, and laid them down to sleep the sleep of the just.

And this is the account which appeared in the *Chronicler* the following morning:—

POLITICAL SPEAKERS OVERSTEP THE BOUNDS OF DECENCY.

REV. FR. ARROLL PUBLICLY ASSAILED BY DEMAGOGUES LAST NIGHT.

"A political meeting was held last night at Washington Corners

by a handful of citizens of Ward B. We are glad to say that this meeting did not represent the majority of the voters of that ward, else we are convinced that it would have been more orderly, and the utterances of speakers would have been characterized by candor and truthfulness. Vituperation is never an argument, and will not serve even the over-zealous politicians of Ward B.

"The speakers addressed a crowd of intelligent voters, who are well-known adherents of the Catholic church, and members of Father Arroll's parish. The remarks were at first confined to political issues, and they were treated with respect. But later they went out of their way to assail the Roman clergy, and Father Arroll in particular, making charges against his personal character. They also threw stones at the parish church, breaking several windows. This outrageous conduct so angered the loyal, law-abiding citizens who listened to the address, and who could not endure to hear their beloved priest thus scandalized, that they demanded a retraction. Of course they failed to get it, and the meeting broke up in the utmost confusion. Those loyal Catholics who heard the speeches are now considering steps to force those men to publicly withdraw their vilifying accusations."

But what foundation of truth was there for such a story? Only this: Van Houton, in his short address, had said: "Any man who permits another to control his vote, whether that other be a politician or a priest, is not worthy of the privileges of American citizenship. Therefore, neither your party leader nor your parish priest should be allowed to dictate to you as to how you shall cast your ballot."

Among the members of the Pure Government Club indignation was at a white heat when this report of their meeting was found, but all their inquiries failed to elicit the name of the man who had given the untruthful information to the press. In the meantime, other papers, willing to learn what were the specific charges against Arroll, sent their reporters to interview him at the parish house.

O'Hara had promptly prepared himself for this phase of the matter, and when the reporters appeared he met them himself with a smooth tongue and smiling face. He excused Father Arroll from the interview, saying that he was indisposed. He had received so great a shock on the previous night, when he was thus unjustly assailed and his church attacked, that he was really ill from it.

When the reporters asked what were the charges made against the Father, he declined, with many apologies, to specify them, saying that the citizens who had heard them had finally concluded, since the good Father's innocence was so perfectly well-known, that they would not press the matter in the courts, and that therefore, he sweetly explained, he himself would not stand in the way of the fulfilment of their most Christian resolution by giving the matter any further publicity.

As for the stone-throwing, he pointed to broken panes of glass in the basement windows, and bewailed his enemies' violence bitterly. But when the children heard of it, later in the day, they said that those windows were broken a long time before,—but perhaps the children were mistaken.

And so the matter was dropped.

Father O'Hara's efforts to oppose the Pure Government Club did not end here. Far from it. Before the day had passed, he visited police headquarters and entered a formal complaint against the club for blocking the sidewalks, saying that they interfered with pedestrians who wished to attend the religious services of the church, and he succeeded in persuading his friend, Murphy O'Donnell, the official who had such matters in charge, to revoke the club's license to hold open-air meetings. This last priestly thrust might have been parried, however, had the official notified the club of this action, but this he failed to do, and consequently the reverend Father had his sweet revenge.

But Van Houton's words had an opposite effect on one class of his hearers, at all events. Ted and his associates had clung close to the wagon all the evening, and drank in eagerly all that was said. Their admiration for the club was unbounded. George's patriotism was stirred to its depths, and he proudly explained to the others that his name was George Washington Duane, and that he was named for the man that beat the British.

"You come up with me to Hollis Street and I'll show you where George Washington marched his army when he was a-fighting old Cornwallis. I know all about it. Why, this street used to be named North Road, but after he took his army through it they changed it to Washington Avenue. My grandfather knows all about it. He wasn't any bigger than me then, and he used to live on Hollis Street, and he see Washington himself when he marched through. And he see all the soldiers, too. You just come up there with me and I'll show you."

It was already late, but the boys trotted behind this wonderful leader through the dark avenues, until they stood on the corner of Hollis Street.

"Now, it was right here that George Washington had his soldiers. You see, they were all over on the other shore, and then they went to the fort out there in the bay, and then Washington he thought he'd get a better chance at those pesky British if he come over here, so he packed the whole lot of soldiers and guns and brought them all over here. They landed down on the end of Hollis Street, and come right up this way, and then they went up the old

North Road. Oh, I know just how they looked! My grandfather's told me lots of times. And Washington was the bravest man in his country, and he had an awful hard time, and he never give in, and by-and-by in the winter time he didn't have anything to eat but baked potatoes, and the soldiers all had to go without shoes. But he never give in, and after awhile he whipped the British, and old Cornwallis laid down his arms, like the history says, but that means he give up the job and went home. I don't think they'd ought to have let him go. I would just like to have seen them old fellows all laid out for the way they treated Washington. If I'd been them, I bet you I wouldn't have let a single fellow get away alive. I tell you, when I get to be a man, I'm going to be a soldier and fight for this country. There ain't no country like it. I'm just glad to death that I'm an American."

"Is dis better nor Italo?" asked Pietro, following close behind as the boys now turned to retrace their steps to the Corners.

"Italo!" said George, scornfully. "Of course it is. No other country can hold a candle to this one. Why don't you fellows say *Italy?* That's the way we learn to say it in geography."

The boys listened in undisguised amazement. Did he know about their country, too? Where did this boy's knowledge cease? The problem was too great for them, and they relinquished it in despair.

"I tell you," said George, his enthusiasm kindling again, "there ain't no country that can compare with this one. Why, Europe ain't nowhere. This is just the biggest country on record."

"Oh!" said Ted, and they all sighed ecstatically.

The square was now dark again, and all was quiet. The boys parted at the corner of Cabot Lane,—the street which marked the lower boundary of the square, and went to their several homes.

Ted crept noiselessly up to his father's door. All were asleep but Tess. Ted crept over to her, and lay down on the old quilt in the corner which was their bed; for Dennis occupied the couch, and there was but one bed in the establishment. Tess had been whipped as usual, and was still crying over her bruises. Ted put his arms affectionately around her neck, and kissed her softly, and then whispered an account of the evening's events.

When he had finished, Tess whispered her confidences also.

"Dad's a-goin' to de Mish'n, Teddie," she said. "An' Mr. Rossi says he'll git 'im to tell de priest not to whip us any more."

"Did de Mish'ner say dat?"

"Yes, an' Agnes Flannigan says de priest don't care fer anybody's fader. I wished I could go to de public school. De girls all say dey don't get no lickin's dere."

"George Duane allus goes to de public school," said Ted. "An' he knows lots an' heaps. He's de smartest feller ye ever seed. He kin read everyt'ing."

"Do ye t'ink maybe dad'll let us go to de public?" asked Tess, yearningly.

"I dunno," said Ted, and then both children fell asleep; Tess with visions of the pretty blue dress dancing before her eyes, for to-morrow was sewing school day, and Ted with the sound of martial music in his ears, and dreams of soldiers, and one gigantic man who towered above them all and kept crying out that his name was George Washington Duane.

CHAPTER IV.

In the morning Tess watched in her corner until her father left the house, which was not until eleven o'clock, and followed nimbly after him.

"Dad," she said, overtaking him on the stairs, and slipping her little hand into his, "come over by de fact'ry. I wants to see ye."

The poor, blear-eyed drunkard, sober now after his potations of the previous night, looked down at the child confusedly, as though trying to comprehend her words; then he turned slowly to go with her. They sat down in a quiet nook in a bend of the old stairway, where they were quite hidden from view, and Tess crept into his arms, and for a few moments satisfied her hungry little heart with her father's love, caressing his sunken cheeks, and kissing his dry, hot forehead. At last she said:—

"Dad, dear dad, won't ye let me go to de Mish'ner's? Dey's all so good dere. An' none of 'em don't never hit ye, an' dey tells de good stories, an' sings de songs. It's like de heaven dere, an' no purgatory at all. An' dey makes de dresses an' sews de aprons an' de cards. An' oh! dey give me de dress, too. I ain't never had a dress like dat afore. An' I sews it, every time I sews de pretty dress. An' I goes to de sewin'-school. An' all de Dago girls goes, an' Agnes, an' Maggie Ryan. Won't ye let me go, me an' Teddy? We won't never do any bad dere. An' nobody don't swear, nor hit ye. Dad, please let me go."

He looked at her solemnly, but his brain was too much clogged by years of liquor drinking to understand her, or to realize all that this request implied. But he felt dimly conscious that it was something which in some way opposed the priest. Now Patrick had been taught the Catholic faith, and as far as he had any religion it was

the Roman Catholic. But he loved his children, and had he refrained from drink would undoubtedly have been a good father to them. The Catholic church had no very great hold upon either his intellect or his affections, and when there came an issue between his child and the church, he unhesitatingly chose what seemed to be for the child's interest. As soon as he could gather his scattered wits together enough to answer, he therefore said: —

"I ain't a-hinderin' ye."

"I knows it, dad. But won't ye say we kin go fer sure? Den if dey licks us we kin say you said fer us to go."

"Who's a-lickin' ye?"

"Dey ain't nobody licked us yet, but we's afeard of 'em, an' dassent tell nobody dat we goes. Paulo Colombo's mad, an' he's goin' to tell Fader O'Hara dat we goes, an' all de girls is afeard o' him."

"Who'll lick ye den?" asked her father again.

"Everybody," said Tess; "de priest, an' de sisters, an' ma."

"Does dem lick ye?"

"Yeh. Dey hurts awful."

Patrick rose slowly and unsteadily from his seat. He clinched his fist and raised it high above his head.

"Who hits you must settle it wid yer fader. I don't 'low no woman, not even yer ma, an' no priest ner black nun to hit my child. Do ye hear?" He seemed to be speaking to imaginary auditors. "If ye hits my child, I knocks ye. See? Dat's all." And he shook his fist again at that imaginary crowd that threatened his little ones.

Ah, Patrick, you might indeed protect your children, did you not cripple your own arm, and befog your own brain with drink. But who fears a helpless, besotted wretch like you? Surely neither wife nor priest will listen to your commands now.

A sudden thought occurred to Tess.

"Come to de Mish'ner, dad, he's got somet'ing to tell ye. He's dere now. I saw him go up de steps w'en we come in here."

Together the two walked the short distance to Washington Corners and entered the Mission. Frank Rossi was in the office behind the pulpit, and thither went Tess, drawing her father with her.

"Here, Mr. Rossi," she said, "dis is my fader. Will ye please tell him wot ye telled me las' night? Ye don't fergit, do ye? Ye knows wot 'tis."

"So this is your father, Tess? Well, I am glad to see him. We are pleased to meet our little friend's father," he said, clasping the man's hand.

"Yes," answered Patrick, vaguely. His mind was still busy with the thought that had roused him. "An' I don't want nobody to lick her. I don't 'low no man ner no woman to hit my child."

"Who has been beating her?" asked Rossi, gently assisting Patrick to sit down, while he himself sat opposite, and drew little Tess to his knee.

But Patrick's poor brain could not explain the matter, so Tess said: —

"De priest'll know dat we comes here, an' he'll hit us, an' I ast fader to let Teddy an' me come, an' den maybe de priest won't hit us."

Rossi turned and looked at Patrick, and asked almost sternly: "Why do you send your children to the Catholic school? You give them over into the priest's hands, and he takes a father's authority over them. The government has provided schools for the children all over the city. One of the best of those schools is here in our own neighborhood. Those teachers are not allowed to beat or severely punish the children in any way. Why do you not send them there?"

Patrick was too dazed to reply.

"Did you not go to the public school when you were a child?"

"Yeh, dad did," said Tess, quickly.

"If you went there when you were a child, you know that what I say is true. Why do you not send your own children there?"

Rossi waited for an answer. At last Patrick looked at Tess helplessly and asked: —

"Why don't ye go to de public? I ain't never told ye to go nowhere else."

"Ma makes us go to de priest. De priest he comes all de time, an' he's mad wid ye if ye goes to de public."

"Mr. Terry," said Rossi, "if you would stop drinking, and take care of your children, I think that you could prevent all this. But you cannot expect to stop it while you forget to exert your authority as a husband and father, and permit another man to rule your house."

Patrick looked at him, wonderingly at first, then as he slowly realized what was said, a blush of shame mounted to his cheeks.

"If you will let liquor alone, and go to work to support your family, you will be able to save your children from all this suffering, and to give them an education, and to make a good man and woman out of them. But if you keep on as you are, I do not see any hope, either for them or for you."

"Dad can't stop," said Tess, gently. "He allus tries, but de

KNOCK.

"Don't ye mind," he said, turning to Tess. "Dad'll come home by-and-by, I guess, an' be sober, an' take care o' ye."

Rossi was waiting for them at the Mission door, and after giving Tess to his wife, he started with him for the upper part of the city. While waiting, Rossi had told the matter to his wife, and when she drew Tess in with her, it was with a still deeper sympathy for the child than she had before felt. She talked to Tess a long time, questioning her a little about her home life, then telling her stories of the Christ until Tess' eyes shone, and her face grew bright with a purer joy than she had ever known before. Then Tess remembered that it was noon, the time to get beer for her mother, and with a frightened apology she ran hastily home.

"So ye t'ink ye'll go to de public school, do ye?" said Bridget, fiercely. "I see ye! I see ye goin' to de public school!" Her voice rose into a shrill shriek. "I guess I got somet'ing to say about dat. I'll send ye to de House o' Correction first, dat's wot I'll do."

All the hope died out of the child's face.

"Fader said we could," she answered, imploringly.

"Wot do I care fer wot yer fader says? I say ye can't go, an' ye can't." Get out, now, or I'll kill ye."

She struck the child a sharp blow as she thrust the beer pail in her hands and pushed her into the hall. Tess brought the beer in a few moments and placed it on the table. Her mother snatched the pail eagerly and began to drink its contents.

Tess still lingered a moment.

"Aint ye got not'in to eat?" she finally asked.

"Naw. Wot have I got fer de likes o' you,—wantin' to go to de public school? Get out, will ye?"

She picked up her shoe and flung it after the retreating child, who hurried down the stairs.

Tess had not attended school that day. She had risked punishment for that misdemeanor in the hope of gaining her father's consent to their attendance at the Mission. So now she waited idly in the street until the hour for the sewing-school should arrive. She was very hungry. She had eaten nothing that day, for there had been no food in the house except what her mother had selfishly reserved for herself. Ted had been more fortunate, for when he stood in the hall in the early morning crying from hunger, a neighbor had given him some breakfast. Tess was used to the pangs of hunger, but to-day they seemed worse than usual, and twice, when she was playing with the saloon-keeper's baby, she grew dizzy and nearly fell. At last the hour for the sewing-school drew near, and she went

up to the square and sat on the Mission steps, leaning back against the balustrade. Just then the parish school was dismissed, and Ted ran up to her.

"Fader O'Hara ast me was ye home," he said. "An' I telled him ye was runnin' errands fer me moder an' couldn't come."

"O, Ted!" said Tess, gratefully, then added, half fearfully: "Was he mad?"

"Naw, he didn't say not'in' agin it. But he's awful mad wid dad, cos he seen him comin' into de Mish'n. Pietro heerd him tell de big Dago, Borosini."

"Dad's gone. He's gone to get shet of de drink. De Mish'ner took him," said Tess.

"W'ere's he gone?"

"I dunno. But he's comin' back w'en he gets shet of de drink. An' he's goin' to work, like Paddy's fader does."

"Cricky!" ejaculated Ted.

"An' he said you an' me could go to de public cos he used to go an' learn to read like de 'Merican boy wot lives on Briscoe Street."

"I know," said Ted. "Him dat's George Washington Duane. O cricky!"

"But ma won't let us."

Ted's face fell.

"I don't care, if dad said I could go, I'm goin'."

"We don't darst," said patient Tess.

Just then the doors were opened for the sewing-school, and the children, first glancing across at the church and school-house beyond it to make sure that no priest or sister of charity was watching, hurried in. Some came in roundabout ways, clambering over rear fences and entering by the back door; others slipped half fearfully through the basement hallway. But when the session opened, at least forty girls, and half as many boys, all with bright, expectant faces, had gathered. The sewing school was organized for girls, of course, but the boys pleaded so hard to attend that they had finally been admitted, on condition that they observed perfect order. This condition they rigidly fulfilled, and therefore the tables on one side of the room were reserved for their use. They plied their needles somewhat clumsily in the kindergarten cards, but they evidently enjoyed the novel work, and were allowed to continue it undisturbed.

Tess sewed faithfully on her pretty dress, but it would still be many weeks before it would be ready for wearing. Childish fingers could not make great headway when working only one hour per

week. But she knew it would be hers some day, and was happy. When the busy hour had passed, Tess watched the teacher carry away the precious bag in which her dress lay folded, and saw her lay it safely in the bureau drawer. Tess felt strangely tired as she watched her, and leaned back in her chair, with her eyes still fixed on the drawer. A hymn was given out, and one of the older girls pressed her to sing, but she was too weary to lift her voice. She could only gaze at the drawer, vaguely happy at thought of what it held for her. And then, a moment later, the room seemed to grow dark, and she was cold,—so cold,—and oh, so unspeakably weak,—she could not even cry out,—and then—

Little Tess had fallen on the floor. Rossi sprang forward and lifted the fainting child in his arms. In an instant all was confusion. The children were startled and frightened, and the younger ones began to cry.

"She has fainted," said Rossi. "Bring water."

Very tenderly Margaret bathed the little face with the cold liquid, while Lillian Ingalls loosened her dress.

"Wot's de matter?" asked the frightened children of one another, as they gathered around. A dry sob came from Ted's throat as he crept to Rossi's knee.

"Was your sister sick, Ted?" asked Rossi.

"Naw," said Ted. "I guess she's hungry."

"Hungry!" exclaimed the women together.

"Yeh. We ain't had not'in' to-day, 'cept me. Mis' Ryan, she give me some breakfas'. But Tess didn't get none."

"Here, send to the restaurant for hot milk. Will you go. George? You are the oldest," said Rossi.

George Duane took the coin which Rossi drew from his pocket, and was gone like a flash. A few moments later, just as Tess was slowly reviving, he returned. As the child's eyelids fluttered and she began to breathe again, Margaret placed a spoonful of the milk to her lips. She drank it eagerly, as one famishing, and reached out one weak hand for more. Margaret herself could scarce restrain the tears as she fed the starving child. Very quietly Miss Ingalls dismissed the other children, with the exception of little Ted, and soon the missionaries were alone with the brother and sister.

"How long is it since Tessie had anything to eat?" asked Rossi of Ted.

"I guess she had some bread yestiddy mornin'," said Ted.

"Tessie, have you had nothing since yesterday morning?" asked Margaret.

Tess shook her head.

"What did you have then?" asked Lillian Ingalls.

"Some bread an' tea. Jus' a little, cos dere wasn't much."

"This is dreadful," said Margaret to her husband. "The child will die if this continues. Can we not take both Tess and Ted home with us, until their father returns to provide for them?"

"If we can gain their mother's consent, I am willing."

"Shall I ask your mother to let you come home with me for a while?" asked Margaret of Tess.

Tess shook her head.

"Why not?" asked Margaret in surprise.

"She won't let ye. You're Protestant."

"Will she hinder you because I am a Protestant?"

"Yeh. She won't let us go to de public school, an' dad said we could go."

"I think we will ask her, anyway," said Rossi. "And if she refuses, we will see what else can be done."

But fortune — or was it Providence? — favored them. Tess had scarcely left her mother that afternoon, when a stranger came up the stairs and presented himself at the door. Bridget recognized him at once.

"Bedad, an' is it yersel', Uncle Mike? Sure an' I niver expacted to see de likes o' ye back agin in America. Jus' come in now an' make yersel' aisy."

"Dat an' I will," said Mike. "An' how air ye all? Begorra, but ye've got dat han'some I wouldn't know ye at all at all."

"Oh, ye blarney!"

"An' how's yer old man?"

"Sure an' he's jus' gone out o' de city fer a few days. But ye'll stop a bit, maybe, an' see me son Dennis."

And then the new-comer, with whom money was not lacking, sent for ale and beer, and they exchanged their gossip and drank together. Afterward, whiskey was brought in, and then Bridget became so drunk, and withal so good-natured—a most unusual combination with her,—that when Rossi and his wife appeared she greeted them with maudlin smiles and attempts at politeness.

Rossi asked for her permission to take the children home with him and to keep them during their father's absence.

Bridget graciously granted the request.

Rossi suggested that since it was the wish of their father that they should attend the public school, it would be well to permit them to begin at once while at his house.

The whiskey continued its good offices, and Bridget consented again. Indeed, her spirits were so exceedingly mellow that she did not even ask the names of her visitors, and when Rossi tried to explain where he lived, she waved him aside with a sentimental flourish and bade him "to begone wid her blessin'."

Disgusted and heartsick with the shameful scene, Rossi hurried away, taking the children with him. As they quitted Washington Corners and turned into the broad avenue with its arched trees, Tess uttered an exclamation of delight, and as they passed block after block of stately old residences, it seemed to her that she had come into a new world. In all her life she had never before ventured beyond the Corners, nor seen the trees and grass which grew in abundance all over God's green world.

When they reached Rossi's own home, and turned into a garden hedged with shrubbery and fragrant rose-bushes, the children's delight knew no bounds. Rossi longed to bid them play on the lawn at once, but Margaret said warningly: —

"Not now; they must be clean first." And so they ascended the steps to the wide veranda, and entered the old-fashioned hall. Its floor was strewn with costly rugs, and Ted and Tess looked on with amazement as Rossi and his wife walked carelessly over them. They themselves were evidently afraid to step on anything so beautiful, and went cautiously around them. Rossi offered to lift the small-sized Ted into a chair, but he refused and looked askance at his soiled clothes.

"Ted is right, Frank," said Margaret, laughing. "He is not yet ready to sit down I will take them both upstairs and we will cleanse and dress them, and then they will not be afraid of the furniture."

She led the children up the wide oaken stairs, and gave Ted into her maid's hands, while she herself cared for little Tess. The filthy rags which covered the children were taken off and destroyed, and after a thorough cleansing from top to toe, both were newly clothed throughout. Long before Margaret had prepared an abundance of clothing for use at the Mission in cases of emergency, and from this store she now clothed these needy ones.

When the dirt was washed from Tess' little face, and her damp, tangled curls were all combed into order, Margaret uttered a cry of delight, and caught the girl in her arms, for was she not as sweet and fair a child as ever came into the world?

"Dear little Tess," she said, and kissed the sweet mouth, for mother-love was strong in her heart.

And Ted,—you would not have known him, such a bright, manly little fellow he looked in his spotless linen and fine new suit. Frank Rossi whistled in surprise when Margaret brought the children down to him.

"Well, well!" he exclaimed. "Who would have thought that water and clean clothes would work such a miracle? Why, you are a fine little pair, now that you are cleaned up."

And then they gathered around the table in the dining-room, and ten-year-old Tess and eight-year-old Ted, for the first time in all their lives, sat down to a meal so abundant that there was enough for all and to spare. They looked on with ever-increasing surprise at the food that was taken away from the table as the meal progressed, and could not understand it.

When the meal was finished, Margaret took them to the parlor, and they sang all the dear, familiar Mission hymns, while Rossi played for them on the piano. When they had sung to their hearts' content, the maid came and led them away to bed, and they fell asleep under fresh, dainty coverings.

On the following day the children were entered in the public school, and here in Rossi's pleasant home we will leave them for a few happy weeks.

CHAPTER V.

When Frank Rossi wished to begin his work for the foreigners of his ward he looked about for a building suited for his purposes. He needed one that would afford him an audience hall as well as school-rooms adjoining. He searched the desirable parts of the ward carefully, but no building could be found which answered the requirements. He finally purchased a house and remodelled it. It was well situated for his purpose, being on the eastern side of the small square formed by the seven streets called Washington Corners. This building was about fifty feet wide and nearly sixty-five feet long. It had been erected originally as a convent school, and the rear windows were heavily barred with upright iron rods. These rods were secured in the stone work, and could not be removed without practically tearing down the rear wall, with danger of weakening the building, so no later owner had attempted to remove them.

It was three stories high above the basement. Rossi, to make an auditorium, had removed the floor and partitions of the third story, and had cut out the partitions and most of the floor of the second

story, leaving only enough of the floor to form a gallery on three sides of the room. At the front of the building this gallery was about fifteen feet wide, and arranged with movable partitions so that it could be used for class-rooms when desired. On the side the gallery was only the width of the original hall, and served as a passage for the stairway. The rear gallery, over the pulpit, was about twelve feet in width, and in it was placed the pipe-organ which proved so effective an adjunct to Rossi's work. This gallery was also fitted with sliding partitions, which divided it into class-rooms. The lower floor was thrown into one large room, save the side hall and a narrow room back of the pulpit, which Rossi subsequently used as an office.

The basement was sub-divided into school-rooms of generous size. In the front of the building Rossi made radical changes. A flight of wide steps was placed to lead from the street into the auditorium, and double doors admitted the visitor. New windows were cut in the wall and old ones were widened, until the front was almost wholly glass. This insured both light and ventilation.

The building was freshly painted and handsomely decorated, and proved an attraction in itself. Here Howell Madison preached nightly in either the English or Italian language, according to the nationality of his hearers. In the daytime a kindergarten school was held in the basement, and in the evening boys were taught the use of tools, modeling, drawing, etc., and the older girls and young women were instructed in housewifery and dressmaking.

Lillian Ingalls was principal of this school, and although she at first met with many repulses from the people whom she sought to benefit, she eventually succeeded in making it a model school in every respect.

Lillian was orphaned at an early age, and had been reared by an aunt. She was a relative of Margaret Rossi, and had been a neighbor and playmate of Frank Rossi and Howell Madison during their childhood. But she was comparatively poor, having nothing in her own right. While her aunt cared for her most willingly, Lillian knew that at her aunt's death she would be obliged to care for herself, since the aunt's income would cease at her death. From girlhood, therefore, Lillian had looked forward to the necessity of self-support, and having natural ability as a teacher, she had carefully fitted herself for that work. She had just graduated from a famous college when Rossi opened his Mission. He offered her the principalship of the industrial school connected with his work, leaving the whole plan of the work in her hands. Many a young woman would

have declined a task so beset with difficulties and hardships, especially when the honor in no way compensated for the trials. But Lillian Ingalls was made of stern stuff, and above all, she earnestly desired to serve that Master of all, who to the world is invisible. She had long asked Him to guide her into His vineyard, and she looked upon this offer as assuredly the Divine answer to her prayers. She therefore accepted the task, and brought to her work inherent ability, thorough preparation, all the zeal and energy of a strong will in a healthy young body, and the fire and heroism of a dauntless spirit.

Rossi's money, his service, his music, his wife's loving help, Madison's eloquent preaching, — all of these could not have won that great victory over the sin and credulity of the neighborhood which they did win, without the faithful work of this young teacher. They all loved her. To Margaret and Frank she was like a sister. To Madison,—ah, to him she was dearer even than sister or friend. He loved her as man seldom loves,—loves only when he has found his own soul's mate. He longed to tell her, and to win her promise to be his wife, but Lillian seemed to be absorbed in her work, and she apparently had no thought or interest apart from it.

The day following Tess' illness in the sewing-school, Lillian hurried from home in the morning to her friend's house, anxious to know if Tess had quite recovered. As she entered the gate one might be easily pardoned for admiring her. She was strong and lithe and supple, and while not above medium height, she was so erect that she seemed almost tall. Her hair and eyes were very dark, and her skin was the clear white which one sometimes sees in the Russian. When animated, her cheeks had the habit of glowing richly, like some deep red rose in the shadow of a garden. Her features were regular and clearly cut. She was a handsome woman, certainly, but the children who knew and loved her declared her beautiful. Margaret met her on the veranda steps.

"Good morning, Lillian. Why have you come so early? You needed more rest after the evening school," said Margaret.

"I want so much to know how little Tess is this morning. I could scarcely sleep last night for thinking of her."

"Tessie is quite well, and both she and her brother have started to school. Frank has just taken them over himself to enter them. There he comes now."

"Good morning, Lillian," said Rossi. "Have you come to ask for the children?"

"Yes," answered Lillian. "Were they as pleased to enter the public school as they thought they would be?"

"Yes, indeed. They are thoroughly happy."

Then the missionaries fell to talking of their work, and an hour passed before Lillian rose to go.

"Will you call on Mrs. Madison this morning?" asked Margaret. "She has been asking for you, and longs to see you."

Lillian flushed a little, and seemed somewhat confused. In her inmost heart she knew that the manly young preacher had impressed her far more than she wished to admit, even to herself, and she had no desire to come in his way otherwise than her work demanded. But she loved Mrs. Madison dearly, and when Howell had been nothing more to her than a schoolmate, she had visited them freely Mrs. Madison had become very fond of the motherless girl, and missed her bright presence much. With Lillian, at this moment, the desire to see her old friend again strove with her natural shyness at meeting the man whose eyes had already told her that he loved her, and she hesitated to answer Margaret's question.

"Yes, Lillian, do go," said Frank. "Both Howell and my aunt will be delighted to see you. Why do you hesitate?"

"Oh, certainly I will go," said Lillian, quickly, although the tell-tale flush deepened perceptibly in her cheeks. "I shall be very happy to see Mrs. Madison again."

She walked slowly down the avenue, revolving a certain question in her mind, but apparently finding no satisfactory answer to it. Her thoughts finally ran thus: —

"I am very foolish to think that Howell cares for me. I have only imagined that he looked it. I am very egotistical to think of such a thing. I am ashamed of myself. Besides, I want to use my life for a high purpose. A woman cannot marry if she is to be a successful teacher. I have chosen teaching as my life-work, and I must abide by my choice. It is utterly impossible for me to think of marrying any man, no matter how much I might happen to like him. I ought not to have such thoughts as these, anyway." She was near the gate now. "What is such a subject to you, anyway?" she continued, addressing herself in the second person. "*You are a teacher*, Lillian Ingalls, just remember that. Besides, if you are sober and dignified, no man is likely to have the temerity ever to propose to you, and you will not have the trouble of refusing him. So just keep your backbone stiff, and no one will trouble you."

But she comprehended little of the calibre of the man whom she thus mentally set at nought. Howell Madison was too keen a reader of human nature not to have half-divined her thoughts already, and he therefore set himself, by every honorable means in his power, to

win her love so completely that all objections should melt away, like snow in the sunshine.

As she came up the walk, he saw her from the window of his library, but gave no sign of his presence there. He waited until she had enjoyed a long, quiet visit with his mother, and then, just before the hour for luncheon arrived, he went in search of them. He found the white-haired elder woman and the younger with the blue-black locks sitting side by side in the old arbor under the trees. They looked so happy together that it seemed a pity to disturb them, and he was half-inclined to turn back, but his mother saw him and called at once: —

"Come here, Howell. This is Lillian, who has been kind enough to make me a visit."

The young people exchanged greetings, and then Howell seated himself opposite them, and joined merrily in the conversation. He was thoroughly a gentleman, and quickly put Lillian at her ease, so that she forgot to blush, and her bright eyes met his as unconsciously as ever in the old careless school days.

When they had eaten luncheon, Howell took her to the drawing-room and showed her the fine views of European scenery which he had collected when abroad, and he succeeded in making her visit so delightful that she was vaguely sorry when it was time to go.

Howell walked with her to the Mission, since he had calls to make in the neighborhood. All the way he talked with her so earnestly and seriously of the vexing problems of their common labor, that she found herself laying bare to him the innermost anxieties of her daily experiences. Never before had she talked so freely to him, and she now found his words a strong encouragement to her.

When he left her at the door of her school-room, she had a curious feeling of having found again some long-absent friend, and she acknowledged to herself that she had been wrong in avoiding him as she had done of late. Then she laughed as she remembered her thoughts of a few hours previous. There had certainly been nothing lover-like in his attitude toward her that day, and she was angry at her own boldness and vanity in having thought of him as a lover. But why did a feeling of half regret — of undefined sadness — come over her? Did she almost wish he had been, after all? The smile on her lips slowly faded, and a sigh fell from them. Was she wrong, after all? Could there be any higher duty, even if a sweeter, than she had elected for herself? She thought again, and another sigh fell sadly from her lips, and —

Then this woman of stern common sense rose to her feet, ban-

ished all tender feeling relentlessly from her heart, and turned defiantly to her duties.

At five o'clock that afternoon a group of boys presented themselves at the door of her school-room. Lillian came forward, and listened as Pietro Borosini, the spokesman, said:—

"Miss Ingalls, we alls wants to know kin we go in de store-room in de cellar fer awhile?"

"The store-room—in the cellar!" exclaimed Miss Ingalls, in surprise. "What do you want to go there for?"

"Well, we alls wants to have a meetin'. An' ye don't have not'in' goin' on down dere, an' we don't want to ast fer no school-room."

"What sort of a meeting are you going to have?"

"Well, it's a polit'cal meetin'."

"A political meeting!" She was more than ever surprised, and smiled with amusement. The smile was slightly disconcerting to Pietro, but he continued bravely:—

"Well, we want to have a club, we alls does. An' George Duane's a comin', an' we won't do no harm down dere."

"Promise not to strike any matches, and you may go. I will send the janitor to light the gas for you, but you must not touch it, nor throw anything near it, for fear of fire."

"Sure, Miss Ingalls, we won't. We won't hurt not'in'," said Pietro.

"Naw, we won't," assented the other boys, eagerly.

A moment later, they were on their way to the cellar-room, preceded by the janitor. There were five of them,—Pietro Borosini, Paulo Colombo, Tony Costello, Micky Healy, and Juan Miro. They were scarcely inside before George came bounding in, breathless from running.

"I say, are you fellows all here?" he cried. "Hello, Juan, glad you've come."

There was one good thing about George that helped immensely to secure his popularity, and that was his universal friendliness. If he was an American, and therefore the smartest boy in the colony, he was not "stuck up" about it, as they said. He could "come down" and be friends with everybody. If Juan Miro had not known this he probably would not have had the courage to come into this august assemblage. Juan was a Spaniard,—a little, brown faced, black-eyed lad, who had lately landed from a Spanish steamer. Juan was unusually timid, and looked upon the invitation to take part in this movement as a grave honor, and he regarded the boy who stood

at the head of the enterprise as a benefactor to the human race in general, and to himself in particular.

"Now all you fellows get seats somewheres," said George. "I will sit on this barrel, and the top of this box will be my table."

The boys seated themselves as best they could. Pietro mounted a saw horse, Micky Healy reclined on a pile of shavings, Paulo balanced himself on the edge of a nail keg, Tony climbed to the top of the wood-pile, and Juan ensconced himself on a heap of sand, which had been left by the builders.

"Now we want to do this business all up brown, we do," said George. "We must have orficers, and a Cons'tution, and we must all sign it, and we must promise that we'll stand together, heads or tails, live or die, sink or swim, honest Injun."

"Wot's dat we must have, dat we all makes de cross on? Say it again," said Pietro.

"A Cons'tution," said George.

"Wot's dat?"

"That? Why, that's — that's — why, that's what we swears to. Now I'll tell you. Now, it's just this way. You see, you fellows ain't all Americans. You don't belong to this country."

Paulo looked apprehensive.

"We's goin' to," said Pietro.

"Yes, I know," said George. "But—"

"Say dere," said Micky Healy, excitedly, "Fader O'Hara says we all belongs here. An' de sister said dat dis is de Cat'olics' place."

"Huh!" said George, in disdain. "I don't care what no priest says, nor no sister neither. Don't I know who made this country? It was the people that came over in the Mayflower, and all the others with them. They wasn't Catholics at all. Don't I know all about Roger Williams and William Penn? And they wasn't Catholics. I say, you fellows make me expressly tired. But," he added, pacifically, "of course, you can't help what the priest tells you. The only thing that you can do is to go to work and learn better. Now, as I was saying, being as you ain't Americans —"

"Yes, we are," interrupted Micky.

"Say dere, you shet up," and Pietro kicked a lump of coal toward the pile of shavings.

"As I was saying, being as you are going to be Americans, why, you must all sign a Cons'tution —"

"Den will we be 'Mericans fer sure?" asked Juan, his little black eyes dancing.

"Yes," said George, solemnly. "When you believes American ideas and signs de Cons'tution, you're an American. Now, what we've got to do is to get this Cons'tution."

All the boys looked wise.

"Now the way they do is to select some one to write the Cons'tution. Now one of you fellows say who shall write it."

"Me," said Micky.

"Naw, you can't write," said Paulo, in disdain.

"I kin write mos' as good as you kin. I knows mos' all de letters," argued Micky.

"We no kin write," said Juan.

"Can't none of you fellows write?" asked George.

Pietro shook his head. The rest looked discomfited.

"Don't you boys know nothing?" asked George, almost losing his temper. "What do you go to school for, anyway?" You're just as old as me, ain't you? How old are you?" he asked, turning toward the saw-horse.

"I'm fourteen," admitted Pietro.

"And I'm thirteen. You're a whole year ahead of me."

Pietro's countenance fell.

"How old are you?" and George glanced at the nail-keg.

"I'm t'irteen, too," answered Paulo.

"And you?" George glared at the shavings.

"I'm 'leven goin' on twelve," said Micky, and followed the announcement with a war-whoop of approved pattern as he turned a double somersault over the shavings.

Paulo reached over with a broken bat and struck the revolving figure fairly on the seat, which sent Micky sprawling into the wood-pile.

"I say, now, dat ain't no fair," growled Micky, as he rubbed his injured anatomy sulkily.

"Go on," said Tony, addressing the chair. "I'm twelve goin' on t'irteen. Ast Juan."

"I'm 'leven," said Juan.

"Here you fellows are old enough to know about this country, and how to read. Why, I'll warrant you can't even parse. Now I can parse a whole sentence," said George.

Five boys looked blank. They had never even heard of parsing.

"I say," continued George, in a disgusted tone, "why don't you fellows quit that school, anyhow? What's the good of going where you don't learn anything? Why don't you go to the public school?"

"De priest won't let us," said Paulo, shortly.

"Oh, well, I ain't got nothing to say about it, of course. And I ain't got no business to monkey with your religion. *We* say, let a fellow believe what he likes. He can believe in a toothpick for a god if he wants to. But we Americans don't want that kind of a religion, that's all. We ain't that kind of people. We ain't built that way, that's all."

A dull glow of shame showed through the brown of Pietro's cheeks. It was the first time in his life that he had been ashamed of his religion.

"But, of course, I ain't got no business with your religion, only a religion that wouldn't let me learn how to write, I'd—well, I'd give it the shake, that's all."

"Our 'ligion's Cat'olic," said Micky, irrelevantly.

"Well, now, since none of you boys can write, I suppose I'll have to write this Cons'tution myself."

In reality, George would have been glad to shift this task to one of the others, but since they were manifestly incapable, it would never do to hesitate and thus acknowledge his lurking desire. He therefore pulled a stump of a lead pencil from his pocket, and looked around for some paper. Micky offered him a shaving, whereat Pietro pounced on the recalcitrant Irish member, picked him up, and flung him headforemost into the sand heap.

Tony found some scraps of wall-paper in a corner, and on the chair turned it face downward and wrote on the white side of it. That is to say, he tried to write. But making "Cons'tutions" was not altogether in his line. He lacked previous experience in the craft, and he now sat hopelessly biting his pencil. The other boys looked on appreciatively, and even Micky subsided temporarily.

"I tell you what," said George, flinging down his pencil after a few moments' thought. "I tell you what, we've just got to say what we're for, and what we're goin' to do."

Sensible conclusion! Would that older statesmen were always as candid!

"Now that's just what I'm going to write."

The pencil scratched busily for a while, and then George glanced up with an exultant smile, and surely the honorable chairman may be forgiven if he did lift his heels delightedly in air and click them together a few times. Great matters of state have been ratified with less excusable demonstrations.

"Here it is I've got it. Just listen to this."

CONS'TUTION.

We are for this American rippublic. We are going to be Americans. We are no more for any other country, prinspully Irish, Italy nor Spain. We are going to vote free.

"Now, how's that for a Cons'tution?"

"Dat's bully," said Paulo.

"All hold up your right hands and swear. No, put your right hand on your heart, and hold up your left hand."

The boys complied.

"Now swear," said George.

Tony gave vent to an oath strong enough to have condemned him to almost any penance.

"Shet up," said Paulo.

"That ain't what I mean," and George almost screamed in his vexation. "You don't know anything. Now when I read this, you hold up your hands again and bow your heads and say 'Yes.' That's what swearin' is."

The boys stood solemnly while their Cons'tution was again read, and when it was finished they all bowed profoundly, while Micky capped the climax by rolling over and kissing the floor.

"Do you say 'Yes'?" asked George.

"Yeh," shouted the youngsters in chorus.

"Honest Injun?" queried George.

"Honest Injun," answered every boy, heartily.

Tony gave vent to his own enthusiasm by standing on his head, whereat the wood-pile gave way, and with a tremendous clatter he slid to the floor under a shower of sticks.

"Now we's all 'Mericans," said little Juan, with a sigh of content.

"Cat'olics 'Mericans too, now?" asked Paulo.

"Yes, just the same as anybody. That's what our country does for you," said George.

"Hooray!" shouted Micky, and all the boys looked very happy.

"Now we've got to elect orficers," said George. "Who do you want for president?"

"I t'ink *you*," said Juan.

The other boys readily assented. George was evidently pleased at the honor conferred upon him, and said graciously:—

"All hunkey! Now we've got to have a name for this here club."

"Washington," promptly responded Pietro.

Paulo applauded with a well-aimed chunk of coal; Tony had

crawled back to the wood-pile, but he almost tumbled off again in his exultation, while Micky sent the shavings flying in all directions, and Juan looked radiantly happy.

"Washington's good,—Washington's the name," said George, with great benevolence.

At that moment the door opened and the janitor appeared.

"Come, boys," said he, "it's time to go to supper, and I want to turn this gas out."

The boys instantly vacated the apartment, and soon emerged into daylight once more, and with a parting promise to come to the square again as soon as suppers should be finished, the great juvenile adjunct to the Pure Government Club dispersed.

CHAPTER VI.

It may be stated in defence of Murphy O'Donnell, the official who cancelled the license which had been issued to the Pure Government Club, giving them the right to hold out-door meetings, that he had no very clear recollection of the names of the gentlemen composing that club. A clerk of the club had procured the license, and the application was now on file. Had the official borne in mind the social position of these club men, their wealth and eminent ability, he would have hesitated to revoke the license without further consultation, and he certainly would have speedily informed the club of his action, and not have invoked the odium which soon after attached itself to his name. The matter drew the attention of the entire city to the fight in Ward B. Yet such was the unexpected trend of events later that this very action and its consequences rendered the Pure Government party a significant service, for the incident became campaign capital that was used all over the city, and served as an illustration of the devious ways and questionable methods of the Falenites.

But here is the incident:—

The club had arranged for a parade and speeches. The night approached, and the club members gathered in force. Nearly every anti-Falenite voter in the ward was present. Just at nightfall the brass band appeared, electric lights blazed out over the square, and with drum and fife preceding, the first contingent of the noble army of anti Falenites marched in order down the street. Then followed

the band with its stirring music, and the remainder of the club and its adherents fell in line behind it. On the tail end of the procession six small boys marched solemnly. At the head of this juvenile band was George Washington Duane, bearing a discarded broomstick, on which was tacked a strip of old and rather soiled wall-paper. On the back of the paper was scrawled in letters as black as juvenile fingers dipped in coal-dust could make it: —

WASSHINGTUN KLUB.

In the middle of the broomstick a string was tied, and undersized Juan Miro tramped sturdily in the rear of the glorious president, holding this string. The other boys fell in behind, Pietro with Tony, and Paulo with the irrepressible Micky. Each of these four gallantly bore an American flag. To be sure they were only "centers," as Micky expressed it, and had to be lashed to a stick to reach above their heads, but they expressed the boys' patriotism, and were therefore a source of purest joy to these newly-fledged Americans.

The flags had been acquired in various ways. Pietro earned his by running errands. Paulo sold newspapers, and therefore his was the product of honest industry. Micky gambled for his cent, and Tony stole his from his mother's pocket book. But Juan was flagless. He had found no opportunity to earn it, and an innate sense of right and wrong made him forbear to steal or gamble for it. Nevertheless his heart was heavy when he came to the club gathering without that marvellous ensign. His lips quivered when the others marched about with their tiny banners, and there was imminent danger that his patriotic zeal would be quenched in a flood of tears if something were not done immediately. A bright idea suddenly occurred to George, and in imitation of larger flag-bearers, he tied the string to the broomstick, and Juan was consoled.

With much brilliancy the great procession wended its way down Washington Street, and thence through Briscoe to Hancock Avenue. They intended to thoroughly encompass the district, and to return to the square through Fernwood Avenue. But prieatly craft, aided by an obsequious official, ordained otherwise.

Father O'Hara sat calmly behind the half-closed shutters in the church study, and allowed his opponents to proceed with their preparations. He allowed them to form in line. He was even more magnanimous than that, for he permitted them, without a wave of his hand in interference, to start upon their way. Then when the celebration had reached just the height to which he wished it to go, the reverend father showed the master's hand.

"Riley!" he called.

Riley came obediently from the corridor.

"Do ye see that now? Begorra, do ye see that? Fine little persission that, ain't it now? What do ye say to stoppin' it? Just go up to police headquarters and inquire if their license wasn't revoked. An' if it was, — an' you'll find it was, I'm thinkin' — just call me good friend O'Flaherty, who's the policeman on beat this very minute, an' tell those owdashus fellows to stop."

Riley went post haste to headquarters. In a quarter of an hour he was back at Washington Corners, and looking for O'Flaherty. The latter was walking stolidly back and forth on Briscoe Street. By this time the procession was well on its way to Fernwood Avenue. An immense crowd followed to view it, and the enthusiasm was at its height. O'Flaherty's greenish-blue eyes snapped when Riley explained his errand. Evidently the service required was quite to his liking, and he stroked his club affectionately as he strode through a cross-street ready to head off the crowd.

As he reached the crossing toward which the procession was advancing, he placed himself immediately in their way. The column was headed by the drum and fife corps, and as they—unsuspicious—attempted to swing around out of the burly policeman's way, O'Flaherty called out sternly: —

"Halt!"

The corps looked at him in bewilderment, not comprehending his word in the noise of the drums, and still strove to pass on.

"Halt, I say!" said O'Flaherty, bringing down his club on the nearest drummer's shoulder. Confusion instantly followed.

"What's the matter? What are you stopping us for?" exclaimed the indignant fifer.

"Ye'll find out wot I'm shtoppin' ye fer. Halt there, will ye? and he made another lunge at a fleeing drummer. Just behind the drummers Villars was leading half a hundred paraders. Pushing his way through the crowd, he asked: —

"What is the reason of this, officer? What right have you to stop the parade?"

"W'ere's yer license? Ye ain't got no license fer no parade, an' I'll arrest the next man dat takes a step over dis yere crossin'."

"License!" exclaimed Villars. "Certainly we have a license. It is in the club rooms. Go up there and see it if you don't believe me."

"I say ye ain't got no license, an' ye ain't. An' ye don't stir a step farder on dis street."

By that time the street was densely packed with the people.

"I say we have a license and you have no right to stop us."

"Come on! Come on!" called the fifer. "He can't stop us. We are all right."

The crowd surged on again. Instantly the officer, aided by two others whom Riley had sent to him, began to use his club, and rained blows right and left. Screams and groans were heard on every side, while the crowd pushed back and outward. Some fell and were trampled under foot. Some were seriously injured by the heavy clubbing. Then the officers seized the fifer, Villars, and several struggling fellows, and marched them off to the station house. In the onslaught a score or more were wounded, and one poor fellow was maimed for life.

Rossi, Wendell, Hollis, and their associates were farther down the lines, and although they realized that there was trouble in front by the sudden halt, and the crowd and cries that followed, it was impossible in the press to draw near enough to learn what was the matter. Breaking from the ranks at a cross street, they sprang into cabs standing near, and drove around to the front just in time to see Villars and his fellow-sufferers carried off by the policemen. They followed and joined them at the station house.

"What is the matter?" asked Rossi. Villars explained it briefly while the sergeant was listening to the policeman's charge and entering it upon the blotter. Rossi and Wendell then stepped quickly forward.

"This is an outrage, sergeant," said Wendell. "We secured our license to parade several weeks ago. We are entirely within the law."

"You are mistaken, gentlemen," said the sergeant, grimly. "I am informed from headquarters that your license has been revoked, and my men were forced to arrest you for parading unlawfully."

"Revoked!" exclaimed Wendell and Rossi together.

"Yes, gentlemen, revoked."

"What was it revoked for?" asked Wendell.

"And when was it done?" asked Rossi.

"It was done about ten days ago, upon the complaint of the Church of the Immaculate Virgin that your crowds blocked the sidewalks and interfered with the passage of the worshippers."

Wendell and Rossi looked at one another in amazement.

"Why were we not notified, or given a chance to defend ourselves against the charge?" asked Rossi, indignantly.

"I guess you'll have to ask them as knows," said the sergeant, in the vernacular peculiar to men of his kind.

Villars consulted with his associates, and bail was accepted for the prisoners on condition that they appeared in the police court in the morning to answer the charge against them. But when the morning came the incident was rehearsed with flaring headlines in the daily papers, and its aspect was such that when the defendants went to court they found that the charge had been withdrawn, and they were hurriedly dismissed with many apologies.

When Villars and his companions returned to Washington Corners that night, after having obtained release on bail, they found the little square full of excited foreigners. The most absurd rumors were afloat to account for the trouble. Rossi and Villars mounted a wagon and explained the matter to the crowd, and then dismissed them, after which the Pure Government Club retired within doors and held an indignation meeting.

Villars mounted the platform and related all he knew of the affair. Then the fifer was brought forward and bidden to tell his story. In the meantime, close up to the platform, squeezed tightly against the wall, were huddled six small boys. They were looking on with solemn, awe-struck countenances, while tiny American flags, lashed to the end of split sticks, were held above their heads.

Dr. Starr was making a humorous speech toward the close of the meeting when he caught sight of those same small boys. George, with his tattered banner, was in front, pressed against a railing that divided the secretary's desk from the main part of the room.

"See!" said the doctor, pointing to the boys. "Even our rising generation has taken part with us in this struggle for our liberties as American citizens. There are youths bearing American flags,"—here the speaker was interrupted by the laughter of the audience. "These boys are teaching us a lesson. Even in childhood they are bravely honoring their country, and equalling us in the open stand which they have taken."

The boys' faces brightened perceptibly. A few moments later the meeting was closed, and Starr and Villars came down from the platform. Villars went directly to the boys.

"Who are you?" he asked, addressing them collectively.

"We're the Washington Club," replied George, promptly, exhibiting his banner, now almost torn from the broomstick.

Other club men gathered round, curious to see the audacious youngsters.

"The Washington Club!" exclaimed Villars.

"What's your object, boys?" asked Rossi, who quickly recognized them.

George squared his shoulders and repeated the "Cons'tution," whereat every boy's hand went up and every boy's head bowed profoundly at the last word.

"Good for you!" exclaimed Hollis.

"Three cheers for the Washington Club!" said Dr. Starr.

"Hurrah!" cried the others.

"Dese flags is ourn cos we's 'Mericans," explained Micky.

"We's all got flags, all but Juan," said Tony.

"Juan ain't got no money," explained Pietro.

"Did you follow the procession to-night?" asked Dr. Starr.

"Yeh, we was all dere, behind dat man," and they pointed to Van Houton, who had marched at the rear.

"What are you going to do next?" asked Rossi.

"We's goin' to follow you, Mr. Rossi. Kin we?"

"Do you boys mean to say that you will stand by this club all during the campaign?"

"Yeh! Yeh! We will!"

"What if your fathers object?" asked Hollis.

Six faces fell.

"I'll come anyway," said Pietro.

"I'll come, too," said Paulo.

"Suppose the priest forbids you," suggested Rossi.

The boys were silent.

"We's 'Mericans," finally vouchsafed Micky.

"Good for you!" cried Starr. "That's the right spirit."

"Yes, that is Yankee independence, sure enough," said Hollis.

The other boys looked relieved.

"What do you say to a juvenile club, Villars?" asked Rossi.

"Capital," replied Villars.

"Just the thing," said Dr. Starr.

"Boys," said Wendell, "suppose we fit you out with flags and uniforms. Will you stand by us, and keep to it during this campaign?"

"Sure," said Pietro, with sparkling eyes.

"Yes sirree," said George.

"Me a flag, too?" asked little Juan.

"Yes, certainly," replied Wendell.

"Oh!" and Juan's black eyes shone with delight.

"Will ye do it fer sure, mister?" asked Paulo.

"If you boys will promise to be obedient and stand by us, we will fit you out and give you a regular part in our work."

The boys' joy knew no bounds over this good fortune. In the

succeeding weeks they were given regular military drill by Villars, who was a member of the national guard, and in good time they were able to march and counter-march in excellent order. They were also taught to drum, so that they could take part in the public parades. They were fitted out with gray uniforms, and presented with wooden guns. Each owned a fine flag, while a real silk banner, inscribed with the club name, was given them by Margaret Rossi. A room was set apart for their daily drill, and here they reported for orders on the nights when meetings were held.

CHAPTER VII.

The children's fear of the priests' displeasure, should their presence at the Mission classes and Sunday-school become known, was not without reason. For some time Arroll and O'Hara had been aware that Catholic children were going into Rossi's Mission, and they were quietly meditating a punishment which should be severe enough to end that heresy forthwith. Besides, since Rossi had entered into politics and was opposing the priests on political as well as religious grounds, ordinary punishment would not express the extreme displeasure which the ecclesiastics felt. They therefore proposed a more subtle and bitter revenge for the heinous offense.

For several weeks O'Hara had been secretly gathering information. In the confessional he had interviewed some of the women who lived near the Mission, and from them he had secured the names of a number of the children who were known to attend, and also discovered the fact that many Italian women went to evening classes in sewing. Then he called Francesca Nolta, a woman notorious for her evil tongue and her hatred of Protestants. He instructed her to watch the front of the Mission building and write down the names of all persons who entered it. He also sent Riley to a tenement in the street back of the Mission, from whose windows the Mission's rear could be seen, and gave him like instructions. For several weeks this watching went on. Then the two faithful sleuths brought to their master a goodly list of names, and soon afterward came the reckoning day for these recreants.

A special service was announced for a certain Sunday, and a full attendance was commanded. The church was filled with people, for no one dared to disobey. In the benches were the prosperous

parishioners who could afford to pay ten or twenty cents for a seat. In the back of the church those who could not afford to sit, stood up. They were closely crowded from the railing to the doors. Many knelt in the aisles and counted their beads, or crossed themselves, or bowed the head and kissed the floor to Mary.

Conspicuous before the eyes of the people was the image of the Virgin Mary,—or shall we throw the mask aside and call it the idol of the Goddess of Nature?* This idol occupied a deep niche at one side of the pulpit, and stood above an altar, upon which candles were burning in profusion. The image itself was the figure of a

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* G. H. Pember, M. A., in his work entitled "The Great Prophecies of the Centuries Concerning Israel and the Gentiles," p. 428, says of the Goddess of Nature, "She is the Beltis, or Mylitta, of the Babylonians; the Ishtar of the Assyrians; the Astarte of the Phœnicians; the Queen of Heaven mentioned by Jeremiah; the Tanata of the Persians; the Isis of the Egyptians; the Shing Moo, or Holy Mother, of the Chinese; the Aphrodite of the Greeks; the Artemis, or Diana, of the Ephesians; the Venus of the Romans; the Friga of the Scandinavians; the Amida, with her son Zaca, whom Francis Xavier found established as the goddess of Japan; the woman presented for worship by Strauss, Comte, and the Theosophists; and the Virgin Mary of the Eastern and Western Catholics.

"This is the goddess of whom we have so often heard as Our Lady of La Salette, Our Lady of Lourdes—to whom it seems there are temples erected even in China,—Nostra Señora del Pilár, Our Lady of Loretto, and Our Lady of Ransom. Indeed, so far as the Pope, with the aid of Cardinal Vaughan and the Brompton Oratory, can effect it, she is now Our Lady of England. And, which is far more disastrous, her image may be seen in certain consecrated buildings belonging to the Established Church.

"It is interesting to mark the characteristics by which, spite of varying names, she can be identified in the different countries which have contained her votaries; but we can only mention one or two of them.

"From the early times of Babylon and Nineveh up to the present day, she has been almost universally represented as a young woman with a male child. And, if there is any exception to the rule in the case of Diana of Ephesus, the deficiency is supplied by the many breasts which were attributed to that goddess, and caused her to be styled 'Πολυμάστος,' or Multimammia. In connection with the Ephesian Diana, there is extant a very interesting decree, inscribed on a slab of white marble, which was found by Chandler near the aqueduct at Ephesus, and of which the following is a translation: 'To the Ephesian Diana: Forasmuch as it is notorious that, not only among the Ephesians, but also everywhere among the Greek nations, temples are consecrated to her, and sacred precincts, and that she hath images, and she hath altars, dedicated to her on account of her plain manifestations of herself, and that, besides, the greatest token of the veneration paid to her, a month is called after her name, by us Artemision, by the Macedonians and other Greek nations and their cities, Artemisius, in which month general gatherings and hieromenia are celebrated, and more especially in our own city, the nurse of its own, the Ephesian goddess. Now the people of Ephesus, deeming it

woman, nearly life-size. A veil hung from its head, and its crown was of gilt with a few cheap jewels set above the forehead.

During the morning hundreds had come to kneel, and to kiss the floor, and to make many prayers before this image, and money had been given for more candles to be burned before her.

In a less conspicuous place, and near to the door, was another image. This was of the cross of Calvary. The wooden figure upon it was revolting in its uncouthness and in the physical agony it attempted to portray.

About the pillars of the church were plaster images of saints,

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proper that the whole month called by her name should be sacred and set apart to the goddess, have resolved by this decree that the observation of it by them be altered. Therefore, be it enacted that the whole month of Artemision, in all the days of it, shall be holy, and that, throughout the month, there shall be a continual celebration of feasts and the Artemision festival and the hieromenia, seeing that the entire month is sacred to the goddess; for from this improvement in her worship our city shall receive additional lustre, and enjoy perpetual prosperity.'

"In regard to this document, two points are worthy of notice. In the first place, honor was rendered to the goddess 'on account of her plain manifestations of herself.' But this is precisely the plea which has been set forth in modern times for the glory of the Virgin Mary; as, for example, it was after her alleged appearances at La Salette, Lourdes, and other places. Secondly, the month Artemision, corresponding to our May, was not only the usual month for the worship of the Goddess of Nature, but is also the one specially devoted by Catholics to the cult of the Virgin. . . . The reader will not fail to notice how characteristic the altar or image, adorned with flowers, is of Paganism, and much of the worship paid to this goddess is no less so. We will quote two specimens of it as witnessed and described by Augustus Hare. The scene of the first is in the Church of Montserrat: 'Soon the bell warned us that the New Year's evening service was about to begin, and we hurried to the church, where, groping our way through the dark pillars, we took our seats close to the reja. There, so many candles were lighted around the altar, that the famous image — a black doll in a robe of silver tissue — shone forth resplendently. The priest who lighted the lamps, when he went up to her, kissed her on the cheeks. When all was ready, a long procession of boys in surplices filed in, and grouped themselves around the image. Then the strangest service began: singing, sweet and soft at first, but suddenly breaking off into the most discordant yells and shrieks, accompanied by a blowing of whistles and horns, beating of tin clappers, with fiddles, trumpets, and cymbals. There were about sixty performers, and a congregation of eight. Altogether it was most extraordinary; but we heard afterwards that this most unmelodious music was intended as typical of the rude worship of the shepherds of Bethlehem.' . . . 'Easter Sunday is a great day in Granada, not because the resurrection of our Saviour is commemorated on that day, but because then, at 5 P. M., the famous "Virgen de las Augustias" goes forth from her church to visit a sister image in the cathedral. . . . The figure is of the size of life, and is better as a work of art than most worshipped images of

before some of which candles were burning at the expense of individual devotees. Chromos, representing the stations of the cross, were arranged in regular order upon the walls.

When Father Arroll came to the pulpit to celebrate the mass, the crowd of worshippers gave close attention, bending the knee or touching the forehead and breast whenever the litany called for their response. The priest spoke in Latin, the surpliced boys responded in Latin, and the choir sang in a strange tongue. From it all, no word of healing or of help fell upon the ears of the people, for they knew no language but that of their mother tongue. Until

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saints. It is dressed in black velvet robes spangled with stars, wears a crown on its head filled with precious stones, and has a sad, pensive expression on its countenance, which is bent over the dead figure of the Saviour — for it is, in fact, a Pietá. Its jewels are most magnificent. . . . As the image left the church, carried by the principal citizens of Granada in full dress, a blare of trumpets and crash of drums greeted its appearance. Guns were fired and rockets sent up; the noise was deafening. As the procession entered the Alameda, with one impulse the whole people fell upon their knees. Many women wept and sobbed as they stretched out their hands in eager supplications. At each step of the procession fresh fireworks rose from the houses on either side of the way; it was like a march of fire, and the appearance of the tall black figure, slowly advancing up the green avenue between the throng of kneeling people, was certainly most striking.' (Taken from Hare's 'Wanderings in Spain.') We must confess that we cannot distinguish between such scenes as these and the grossest idolatry. But, to pass on, it is worth notice that Beltis, the first on the list of names mentioned above, may be almost literally translated by Madonna; and this is also the case with Mylitta and Isis. The latter was the popular appellation of the goddess at the time when she was introduced into the Catholic church, for she had long been worshipped under it at Rome, as well as in Egypt. Now it is a remarkable fact that Isis was regarded as the mother of Horus, and yet as the ever-virgin. Mr. King, in his 'Gnostics and their Remains,' describes an interesting card in his possession on which her figure is engraved, and she is represented as holding a sistrum in one hand and a wheatsheaf in the other, with the legend, 'ñ kvpiá 'Iois ăyvñ,' that is, 'Immaculate is our Lady Isis.' If, then, we remember that in ancient mysteries, the sistrum with its cross-bars stands for virginity, while the wheatsheaf betokens fruitfulness or offspring, we shall see that these two symbols, when taken together with the legend, amount to an emphatic assertion of the immaculate conception of Isis. And this is the origin of the dogma decreed by the Ecumenical Council at Rome in 1870. Usually, the Virgin is represented as an Aryan goddess, with golden hair and blue eyes. (Note: This is the more significant when we remember that most of the great Western painters of Madonnas were either Italians or Spaniards. For, if they did not attempt a Jewish type of face, one would, at least, expect them to have sought a model among the dark women of their own countries. But their Madonna was no Jewess: they had a very different ideal, and drew their inspiration from the blue-eyed Aphrodite, or Venus.) But she sometimes testifies to her connection with other races. The black Virgins, which, during the Middle

the sermon was preached, nothing reached them that they could understand. When Arroll turned to address them, his manner was unwontedly stern, and a vague feeling of uneasiness fell on them.

At his first words all were silent, but soon the listeners heard with bated breath, for he had begun a denunciation of heretics that for bitterness and invective they had never heard the equal. Then from anathemas on heretics in general, he turned to the subject of Protestants in particular, and pictured in words of awful import the eternal damnation which Romish doctrine allotted to them. When the bigotry and prejudice of his audience had been thus fed as fire is fed with fuel, he attacked Rossi's Mission, and in choice phrases from his vocabulary of curses, he pointed out the particular evils which should overtake that and all who should adhere to it as well. By this time the guilty Catholics were pale with fear, and some of the women were crying. The children gazed at the priest with pathetic, troubled eyes, and dared not look at one another for fear of betraying themselves.

Then came the unhappy climax. Taking the list of names from the folds of his cloak, Arroll mercilessly read them before the assembled throng, and accompanied each with curses and imprecations. The relatives of those thus exposed turned upon them in a frenzy of hate. Some were driven forthwith from the church. Some were felled to the ground ere they had reached the street. Others were pulled forward to the priest that he might punish them. Children were dragged home by enraged parents to be furiously beaten there, and some still bear scars of that day's chastisement, and will bear them to the day of their deaths. The occurrence became the sensation of the hour, and the Italian colony was stirred to its depths. The culprits were disgraced in their neighbors' eyes, and the priests laid heavy penances upon them when they came sorrowfully to confession.

At the Mission that day, and for many succeeding days, the only attendants were a few Protestants who lived among the for-

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Ages, were highly venerated in certain French cathedrals, proved upon critical examination to be basalt figures of Isis. And, doubtless, the hideous black dolls of Le Puy and Loretto, as well as the Madonna di San Luca of Bologna and the recently-described goddess of Montserrat, are to be referred to the same original. But time will not permit us to pursue these identifications at greater length; the evidence is practically inexhaustible, and those who choose to examine it cannot avoid the conclusion that, from Beltis to the modern Virgin Mary, the Nature-goddess has been worshipped, under various names, and with rites and ceremonies suited to the idiosyncracies of each nationality, in every country under the sun."

eigners. The reason of the diminution was soon made known, for George Duane heard of the trouble from the children, and told the waiting missionaries. There was sadness and disappointment in the chapel when the news reached them, especially when the tear-stained faces of the children were seen for a moment on the street. Poor little ones! Their punishment had been hardest to bear.

For some weeks the Mission remained nearly empty. The drawers wherein were kept the pretty dresses which the girls of the sewing-school made, were not opened. Tho school-books remained upon the shelves. The tools and drawing materials were untouched. Even the kindergarten was deserted, and Rossi's wonderful playing at evening failed to draw men nearer to the Mission than the benches in the little square.

But there finally came a reaction. A few children crept stealthily in through the back way. Some women came back again under the cover of night, and divers of the men walked boldly up the steps and listened to Madison's preaching, and the services were renewed, although the attendance was but a handful in comparison.

During all these discouraging days the missionaries visited the tenements faithfully. They distributed Christian literature and tried to persuade women and children to listen to the Word of God. Many doors were shut in their faces, but some received them. Kindly attention to their sick, or relief in cases of acute distress, often opened the way for a permanent friendship, and brought the recipients into touch with a purer religion, and in the end many forsook their superstitions for the living faith.

The trial was at first especially bitter to Rossi. The Mission was now nearly a year old. After many months of patient and discouraging work, they had built up a goodly congregation, and some had professed conversion to the new faith. But now these had gone back to their former religion and refused even to recognize him in the streets. As he passed one man in the hallway of his house, the man refused Rossi's proferred hand, and cursed him to his face. Others drew their children hastily within their rooms and closed their doors noisily, to avoid even the polluting touch of the Protestant's garment. Others derided him from opposite doorways, or flung a shower of mud and stones at his back when he had passed.

The whole ward, or at least the foreigners' section of it, seemed to have caught the spirit of animosity and malediction, nor did the tempest of bigotry and malevolence subside for more than a week. Rossi's life was threatened at this juncture, and might indeed have been taken, had not Pietro Borosini warned him of the plot.

For a time the Pure Government Club was obliged to content

itself with such work as it could do without ostentation, and to wait until the high tide of popular hatred should recede a little before it could resume its public labors. Before long they had won Mariano Colombo and Rico Costello, two well known Italians, to the espousal of their cause. These two men thereafter exerted themselves to the utmost to help the anti-Falenite party.

Mariano and Rico entered the club-rooms together one night, and were surprised to see their respective sons, Paulo and Tony, strutting about in their new uniforms, which they had just received and were exhibiting to Villars.

"Hullo! W'ere ye getta dat?" asked the elder Colombo.

"De club, dey give to us," answered Paulo, promptly.

"De club give us de clo'es, an' de gun, an' de flag," explained Tony, excitedly, as he showed his treasures to his father.

"De club teacha to do de march, an' beat de drum," and Paulo caught up his drum and began to move up and down the room with the measured tread of the soldier. Then Pietro and Micky Healy came in, followed by George and Juan Miro. The boys looked well in their handsome clothes, and the two fathers were justly proud. Perhaps no single thing did more to cement their friendship for the club than did this. But when Costello saw Pietro similarly attired he said, quickly:—

"Your fader no lika de club. He beata you sure. You betta no come here."

"I coma anyway. I 'Merican now," said Pietro, staunchly.

"He beata you bad. Maybe he killa you," warned Costello.

"Me no care. Me 'Merican now. Me no for Italo now."

The man had given his warning, and so said no more.

At that moment Lillian Ingalls and Howell Madison entered the club-room. Lillian was deeply interested in the juvenile club, and had set herself to instruct them in American history, so that their enthusiasm for their adopted country was greatly increased. She was eager to see the club in its new uniform, and had come from the Mission to inspect the newly fledged drum corps.

"Oh, Miss Ingalls," exclaimed Tony, running toward her, "we's all got de uniforms, an' de buttons, an' de guns. We's goin' to wear de clo'es w'en we marches. An' we beat de drum an' carry de flag"

"Yes, Miss Ingalls," said George, "we are to march in front of all the parades, and we are to be drummers. And we look fine, I tell you."

"O my cricky! Won't Paddy Flannigan be mad w'en he sees de clo'es!" said Micky.

"Fader says I can go to de public school, Miss Ingalls," said

Paulo. "An' Tony's goin', too. We's a-goin' to-morrer. Our faders is talkin' to Mr. Villars dere, de chap wot drills us, an' he telled 'em to let us go to de public, an' dey's goin' to."

Paulo's eyes sparkled with delight. At the announcement Tony suddenly leaped down on his hands and walked the length of the room with his feet in the air.

Pietro listened with a sad face, and Miss Ingalls said, with quick sympathy:—

"I am sorry that you cannot go, too. But perhaps your father will permit it by-and-by."

Pietro shook his head hopelessly.

"He no lika de club. He no for 'Merica, only for de priest. He beata me if he know," he said.

"But you are a brave boy, are you not? You will be true to your country even if he does beat you?"

"Yeh," said Pietro, earnestly.

Howell and Lillian took their leave of the little drum corps, and went up the leafy avenue in the cool evening. The night was rarely beautiful. They walked as far as Rossi's, and looking in, they saw the missionary and his wife in the brightly-lighted parlor, with Tess and Ted between them. They looked very happy, for Ted was on Rossi's knee, and Tess leaned her curly head against Margaret's shoulder, while they listened to the sweet old Bible stories which were so freely told them. We would hardly know Tess now, so well and happy is she, and one wishes that these days might be prolonged, they are so full of rest and sweet content.

Howell and Lillian lingered a moment, looking at the pleasant group ere they passed on. When they came to Lillian's gate Howell entered with her, and they turned aside from the path and sat on one of the garden seats. The moon was shining brightly, and flecked the pavement with swaying, shadowy leaves and branches. It glistened on a white urn on the sward, and was reflected from the darkened windows of the house. Each of the young people drank in the beauty of the night and rested in its stillness.

Lillian was vaguely happy. Howell seemed half-conscious of it and a gleam of hope came to him. Her ungloved hand lay idly in her lap. He took it in his own and said very gently:—

"Lillian, will you give me this hand?"

A tremor seized her, and a quick flush mounted her cheeks and burned hotly from throat to brow. She could not answer, but all the yearning of her inmost heart said "yes."

"Will you not be my wife, sweet girl?" he asked again.

Still she could not answer, for the very power of the emotions

that strove within her. But while she waited, speechless, her former resolutions came back to stare her in the face, to remind her that marriage and a happy home life were not for her, and that her destiny was far different. She must uplift others, even at the supreme sacrifice of herself, and in the face of this resolve she was forced to turn from her momentary happiness. Slowly she drew her fingers from his grasp.

"Do you not love me, Lillian? Will you put me away from you?" he cried

But she forced back all the surging tide of sweet human love that was rising in her heart, and answered with pitiless coldness: —

"I cannot marry. I do not wish to marry. I live only for my work."

"I will not take you from your work. Far be it from me. May we not work together?"

"I could not think of it. It would be impossible. If one accomplishes the best results, it is only by the complete sacrifice of one's self."

"Not always, Lillian," he answered. "Sacrifice is always noble, but not always necessary."

"Do you call my judgment of the matter in question?" she asked, hotly. "My decision is based upon Scripture. 'She that is unmarried careth for the things of the Lord.' I would make my Master's service the first duty of my life."

"There are many missionaries who have married, and have done better service because of it. Each gained from the other. Neither man nor woman are wholly sufficient alone. Together, as one flesh, they make the perfect whole in character, each supplying what the other lacks. This principle we hold to be true in other walks in life; why should it not also be true in this? If I were not a missionary, I can understand how marriage with me would draw you from your work. But I love this work also, and will help you to serve, rather than hinder you."

"I do not know how it may be with others. But I know that in my own case I can be more free to serve if I remain as I am."

"Are you sure you know what God would have you to do in the matter?"

"Certainly. He has given me my work. I cannot doubt it. Why should I?"

He was silent a moment, then answered by asking a question of her: —

"Do you love me, Lillian?"

"I do not think I should answer that question, Mr. Madison." She was pale now. "It cannot possibly do any good."

"I have given you the best love of my heart," he replied. "All the strength and power of my affection has gone out to you. When we were children together I said to myself, 'When I am a man I will marry Lillian Ingalls.' Do you not remember how we used to play house together in this very garden? Do you not remember how you were always the little house-mother, and I was the father, and Rossi was the old uncle come back from India? How happy we were then, Lillian! How we loved one another, and were not ashamed to say it! Do you remember how I used to draw you to school on my sled, and take you back again? And how Rossi ran beside you and carried your books? And do you remember that when we all ate together at our house, how he and I quarrelled as to which of us should sit next to you? Do you forget all those sweet old times, dear Lillian? I would they were come back again."

She sprang to her feet and dashed the tears from her eyes, as she answered proudly, though her breast heaved and sobs choked her: —

"It is useless, — it is useless to continue this. I cannot marry you."

Howell had risen also. The masterful spirit of the man now rose within him. He reached out and took both her hands in his strong grasp, whether she would or not, and with a voice noble in its quivering pathos, he said: —

"Lillian, hear me. Do not put this love away from you. You do love me,—I know it,—as pure and true a love as ever came to the heart of woman. Do not deny it to yourself. By-and-by, when the springs of youthful affection are closed, when its fountains are sealed forever, you will look back and cry with famishing lips for one draught of this precious stream which is yours to day. Do not rob yourself. God has given you this love. Why should you refuse it? Do not put a sacrifice upon yourself which He does not inflict. He sends those He wills for you, and His choosing is infinitely better than yours can be. If such a love as this never came into your life, then you might know that perpetual maidenhood was His will for you. But since He has sent you this love,— this bit of the divine love which reaches out and binds two people into one perfect being, —accept it,—accept it! Oh, Lillian, hear me!"

Her lips grew white, and her hands in his were cold. Her tongue clove to the roof of her mouth.

"Have you a right to put away this love? Do you know your own woman's heart, or what your future ought to be, better than God knows it? Does He send you the greatest earthly blessing only that you may refuse it? Have you a right to break my heart



as well as your own? I have loved you all my life, Lillian. We were little children together. We grew together and our love grew with our growth. Now that it has blossomed forth into the most perfect flower, think you it should be trodden under foot, just because it dared to live and be beautiful and fill our lives with its fragrance? O love, for my sake and for yours, hear me."

"I cannot," she said.

His face was drawn with pain.

"If ever you change your mind, will you tell me? I shall not cease to love you or to desire you."

"Yes," she answered, and fled from him to the house.

Madison watched her as she went, and when the doors had closed upon her, he left the garden and walked far out upon the avenue. All night he trod the silent highways, going out into the suburbs of the city, and emerged at last in the shaded lanes of the country. In the solitude of the night he strove in vain to find some relief for the bitter sorrow of his heart.

"O Father above," he cried, "why must this sorrow come upon me? Must all my life be barren and bleak? Must I renounce forever this love that has been so much to me?"

But there was no answer, and the grievous questioning went on.

"Must I indeed give up this woman whose life is woven into mine,—who seems a part of my very heart? Must I,—oh, must I tear out her pure image and put it away forever?"

He lifted his head and looked up into the fair sky above him. But that cloudless sky answered him nothing. Oh, the cold mockery of Nature when faith looks not beyond her!

The moon had withdrawn her beams and darkness had settled like a soft, black cloud upon the earth, before the young man's heart had submitted to its burden.

"O Lord God," he cried again, "is it needful for thy purposes that this blight should come upon me? Is this thy chastening? Is it thy purging fire?"

But not yet did the night make answer.

He threw himself upon his knees in the soft grass by the hedgerows, and there he prayed. But no answer came from heaven, and the tumult in his soul raged on until the morning dawned in the far distant east. And then the sterner spirit of the man came forth. He flung his questionings aside, and bowed his shoulder to bear the burden which the all-wise Father would put upon him.

"O my God," he cried in agony, "if thou willest this, thy will be done."

A breeze stirred softly in the trees. He rose and looked about

half-wonderingly, for suddenly all Nature seemed to be in harmony with him. He almost thought she spoke and pointed to a day which should be glorious with the presence of the Creator, when all the yearnings of man's heart and of her own shall be satisfied forever. And there came to his soul a sense of rest, and peace, and infinite sweetness. Words of Scripture, long-loved, but ne'er before so full of meaning, thronged through his mind like the consoling words of friends, and he knew the Spirit comforted him.

In the silence of her chamber Lillian also wrestled, and at dawn her face was pinched and gray, yet no peace had come to her. Nor did it come. Day followed day, and she looked on the man who loved her, and seemed to almost see the touch of God upon him. Never had he been so uplifted, or his words so full of divine power as now. He was like one who had been through Gethsemane, and who had come forth again calm and serene to bear the burdens of his life. When she looked on him a vague unrest seized her. In the stillness of the night his sweet, thrilling words came back again and again, "I have loved you all my life. We were little children together. Our love grew with our growth." And when she had steeled her heart against the tender words, his sad cry rang out in his inmost soul, "Have you a right to break my heart as well as your own?"

She grew sad and miserable. She longed to get away from it all. Her home seemed unbearable, and her school life intolerably irksome. Since the Roman Catholic persecution had reduced their attendance at the Mission to a minimum, she decided at last to go away for a time, and did so.

But no place that she went, by seashore or on the mountain heights, did she find the peace she sought. The same unanswered questions followed her. Weary at last with the struggle, she put forth a final effort, and throttled conscience, stabbing all the sweet desires of her woman's soul. Then she strengthened her resolutions, and built a fortress round her heart out of her stony will.

She came back to her work a stern, cold woman. The children felt some subtle difference in her and were half afraid. She tried to smile and be herself again, and to throw herself into the work with the old-time spirit and ardor. And the ardor was indeed there, but the fragrance of love, which had made it beautiful, was lacking. She had broken the stem of her flower of love, and its petals were dead and odorless.

Ah, Lillian, sweet and pure as you are, you, too, must receive your lessons in life, and your proud heart must learn humility. But your Master is infinitely tender, and all your lessons shall be faith-

fully and patiently taught you, and when they are learned you will look up, — it may be with streaming eyes and sorely-chastened soul, — but you will look up and thank Him.

CHAPTER VIII.

Bridget's spree continued a long time, until the neighbors said that she would kill herself with liquor if she did not stop. Her uncle remained with her for fully three weeks, and during his stay neither of them were known to be sober for an hour. When he went away he left money enough with Bridget to enable her to keep up her debauch for some time longer, and she did not fail to do so. When this money was gone her condition was so pitiable that Dennis listened to her appeals and gave her liquor for another week of dissipation. But Dennis was essentially selfish, and when he had done thus much, he considered that his filial duty had been discharged, — at least for that time. In consequence of this decision Bridget slowly came back to her senses, and to a knowledge of her situation. At first she wondered vaguely why Patrick or the children did not come in. Sometimes Patrick would earn a few cents and buy beer, and she hoped he was even now engaged in that laudable enterprise. But as her first sober day drew near its close, and he did not appear, she began to be frightened. She was weak from the effects of her long debauch, but she hobbled tremblingly to her door, and said to her neighbor, Eileen Ryan: —

"Begorra, an' me Patrick's gone a long time. Have ye seen 'im, Mrs. Ryan?"

"Sure an' ye know dat Patrick's been gone dese six weeks er more."

"Six weeks!" exclaimed the astonished Bridget. "An' w'ere did he go ter?"

"I'll never tell ye. Sure an' it's not mesilf as knows at all, at all.

"Who does, thin?"

"Sure nobody knows at all. I never heerd not'in about it. He jist wint down de stairs wid Tess, and dat's de last I iver see of 'im."

"Tess? W'ere's Tess? An' Ted, — w'ere's Ted?" asked the bewildered woman.

"Sure an' who should know w'ere yer folks is but yersilf? Wot do ye be askin' me fer?" growled Eileen.

"Don't ye know w'ere she is?" asked Bridget again.

"Naw," snapped Eileen, angrily. "If ye'd look after yer young uns ye'd know yer own silf."

Bridget stumbled back and sat down on the edge of the couch. Patrick gone! Ted and Tess gone! What had become of them? Six weeks gone, and nobody knew where they were. She could not understand it. Finally she went over to the saloon, and stepping into the side door, she called softly to Dennis.

Her son frowned when he saw her, but when he had finished serving a customer he went outside. He was growing tired of his dirty, disheveled mother, and asked rather roughly:—

"Wot do ye want?"

"Not'in', Dennis, me b'y, not'in'. I only come ter ast, do ye know w'ere yer fader is?"

"Fader?" said Dennis. For the first time it occurred to him that he had not seen his father in some weeks. Dennis had been sleeping in the saloon for a time, to guard against thieves while some bettors' stakes were in the safe, and he had rarely been at home since his father left. "Naw. I don't know not'in' about 'im. W'ere did he go ter?"

"I don't know. I don't know not'in' about it. Ner I don't know w'ere Tess is, ner Ted."

"Tess? Is she gone?" Dennis looked at his mother incredulously.

"Yeh. Dey's bot' gone, an' I don't know w'ere ner w'en."

Dennis looked sympathetic, and Bridget was not slow to perceive it, and to take advantage of it.

"O Dennis, me heart's broke intoirely. Surely ye wouldn't refuse yer poor, desarvin' moder a glass jus' ter take away her sorrer?"

"Ye kin bring down de pail," said Dennis.

Bridget was now far more interested in the promised beer than in the missing members of her family, and hastened to get her beer-pail. When she returned to the side entrance, she was weeping so copiously that Dennis generously gave her an extra allowance, and in consequence she spent another twenty-four hours in drunkenness. But when she attempted the next day to make a similar appeal to her son's heart, he cut her short and sent her off to "hunt up de kids."

She staggered away helplessly. Hunt? Where should she hunt? Which way should she go? She looked around vacantly. She wandered helplessly up to the square. Here she asked some children where Tess was, but they did not know. She sat down on a bench,

and looked idly at the passing crowd. She was directly opposite the Mission building, and gazed at it wonderingly. She did not remember that she had ever seen it before. Agnes Flannigan and Maggie Ryan were playing near her. She called the girls to her.

"Wot's dat?" she asked, pointing to the big building.

"Dat's de Mission," answered Agnes.

"Wot's de Mish'n?"

"Dat's de Protestant's place," said Maggie.

"Yeh," said Agnes. "W'ere all de girls used to go to sew, and make de soup."

"Protestant!" said Bridget, and promptly cursed the building, crossing herself as she did so.

"Yeh," said Maggie, appreciatively. "De priest says it's a sin to go in dere, an' nobody don't go dere now."

"Before, everybody did. All de Dago girls an' de boys," said Agnes.

"Yeh," said Maggie. "An' you went, too."

"An' so did you," said Agnes, vehemently.

"I don't care," Maggie sulkily replied. "Tess went, too."

"Tess!" cried Bridget.

"Yeh, she did, an' Ted."

"Wot did ye want ter tell her fer?" asked Maggie with a frown. "Yer allus gettin' kids hit."

Bridget swore,—such a volley of oaths and obscenity that the girls started to run away, but she called them back.

"W'ere is Tess? Is she in dere now?"

"Naw," said Agnes, eagerly. "She ain't dere no more. Dere don't nobody go dere now. De priest won't let 'em. He curses."

"W'ere is she, den? I say, w'ere is Tess, an' Ted?" Bridget's eyes were darkening now with anger.

"I dunno," said Maggie.

"We ain't none of us seen 'em, not fer ever so long," said Agnes.

"Don't ye know w'ere dey be, at all?" she asked once more.

"Naw, fer fair we don't."

Bridget sank back in her seat helplessly. She turned it over in her mind as best she could, but she could get no clue to her relatives' whereabouts. Presently the Mission door opened and Rossi came out, crossed the square, and went into the club-rooms. Dissipated women were no rarity in this neighborhood, and he did not especially notice this one. Bridget looked at him carelessly, and wondered vaguely if she had seen him before, and where it was. By-and-by she gathered her scattered energies together, and went back to her

home. She enquired further among her neighbors for her children, but learned nothing. Dennis had sent up some bread and tea to her, and a bundle of wood. She lighted the wood and made the tea, and ate her frugal meal in silence. When it was ended she washed some filthy dishes which had stood on her table for uncounted days, and even made an effort to sweep her floor. She did not do these things because she desired to be clean, but because it helped her to forget for the moment the dreadful craving for liquor which she could not satisfy. All the afternoon she wondered vaguely where she had seen Rossi, but could not answer the question. At night her craving for liquor became almost unbearable, and, taking her pail, she crept into the alley behind the saloon, and under cover of the darkness she tipped up the empty kegs and drained them of their last drops. She did not get much, scarcely half-a-cupful, but it helped her to go to sleep, so that, for a time at least, she forgot the burning thirst within her.

In the morning she wakened with a clearer mind than had been hers in weeks. After a time, when she had eaten, she began gradually to realize what had taken place before her awful debauch began. She remembered Patrick's announcement that he was going away, and then, like a flash, the memory of Rossi and his visit came back. With him, then, were her children, *and he was a Protestant!*

A sudden, deep, terrible anger took possession of her. *Her children with a Protestant!* Her wrath was too awful for oaths. Curses were utterly inadequate. Patrick gone! Her children taken by Protestants! All the slumbering malice and hatred of the woman's wicked nature were stirred to their source.

She crept down-stairs stealthily, and went up to the square again. A fiendish light burned in her eye. She scrutinized the Mission carefully. It was only seven o'clock in the morning, and the doors were tightly closed. She walked softly through a near-by hall, and emerged on the rear court. Here she scanned the rear windows of the building. She hoped to creep into it somewhere and take her children by force, but the heavy iron grating on every opening, made that scheme impossible.

She came out into the street again, and saw the janitor of the Mission go up the steps and unlock the door. She slipped behind a sheltering pillar and watched him. He left the door wide open, but a moment later he came out again and swept the steps and walk. Again he left the door open, and when next she saw him he was unfastening a window in the basement. Then she saw him take up a broom and heard its swish, swish, as he plied it against the floor. Instantly her resolution was taken. With a quick glance around to

see that no one was watching her, she crossed over to the Mission steps and glided in at the open door. To her surprise she found herself in a large, open room, with a wide gallery around it. It was all open, save at the back, where were evidently small rooms. She hurried back toward the pulpit. Here was a room, evidently an office, but no one was in it. She passed into the smaller room beyond, but it also was empty. She turned to the side hall and hurried up into the gallery. Here she went noiselessly from room to room, but no one was to be found. Where, then, were her children?

There was one place more to search,—the basement. Patiently she waited in concealment until the janitor came up to the main floor again. He was whistling merrily as he swept, and quite unaware of the watcher above. This was the opportunity which she sought, and while his back was turned Bridget slipped down the two flights of stairs into the basement.

The hall was dark, but the door nearest her yielded readily to her touch. She found herself in a school-room, and from this one she passed into another and another, until she had at last explored every room in the building, but no trace of her children was to be found. Bewildered, she crawled through an open window into the rear courtyard, and made her way through a neighboring alley to the street. What should she do now? As she asked herself the question her eyes fell on the Catholic church opposite. Ah, now she had it! She would go to the priest, of course.

Father O'Hara was inclined to be surly when the faithful Riley informed him that Bridget Terry wanted to see him. He was just sitting down to a comfortable breakfast, and refused to be disturbed until he had partaken of his meal. When it was finished he went out into the hall where Bridget stood and asked her what she wanted.

Bridget signified her desire for a private interview. Grumblingly the priest led her into an adjoining room.

"Sure an' it's about de Protestants I wants ter speak ter ye."

"What about the Protestants?" asked O'Hara.

"Sure an' dey've stole me boy an' girl, Tess an' Ted."

"They have!"

"Yeh. De man wot's got de Mish'n, he stole 'em."

O'Hara opened his eyes.

"Rossi? Did Rossi steal them?"

"Yeh. I dunno. I dunno wot his name is."

"Is it the man that runs this —— Mission across here?"

"Yeh. Dat's it. I seen im yestiddy, an' he went in dere," and she motioned toward the club-rooms.

"That's the one. It's the same fellow. When did he steal them?"

"I dunno. I guess,—I guess it's a mont' ago." Bridget was ashamed to tell how long she had been drinking.

"Where have you been all the time?"

"I—I ain't been very well," stammered Bridget.

"You mean you've been drunk—dead drunk—all the time. Why don't you take care of your children?"

Bridget began to whimper.

"How did he get them?" asked O'Hara, sternly.

"I—I—I dunno." Bridget did not dare to tell the true story of that affair. "He just took 'em on de street."

"What's he done with 'em?"

"I—I dunno. But I guess he's got 'em."

"See here, you don't know nothin' about it. You're a fool, an' that's what ye are. How do ye know Rossi's got 'em at all?"

"Well, my uncle wot was here, he seen 'im take 'em. He said so. He'll swear on his life he did."

"Hum!" said the priest, rapidly turning over a good many points in his mind.

"Where is Patrick?" he finally asked.

"Sure an' I can't find 'im, neider. He's gone, an' I don't know w'ere he be gone at all, at all. Sure, your riv'rince, I'm only a poor, desarvin' woman—"

"O shut up," said the priest. "You say Rossi's got 'em. How are you goin' to get 'em away?"

"Sure an' if I knowed w'ere he was wunst—"

"Don't ye know where he lives?" asked O'Hara, sharply.

"Naw."

"Well, he lives straight up that street there, on the corner o' Hollis,—northwest corner, by the big tree. Now, you get this into your head, do you hear? I want those children. I want 'em as quick as you can get 'em, an' I want 'em *here*."

He showed Bridget to the door, and she went out on her errand with the stealthiness of a cat. It was now about half-past eight o'clock, and already the school children had begun to gather. Bridget skulked along behind the hedges until she reached Hollis Street. A crowd of children passed her, and as they reached Rossi's gate, two well-dressed little ones ran down the steps closely followed by a maid, and joined the group. Bridget followed unnoticed. To her disgust the maid remained with them until all were safely within the shelter of the big building. Bridget's wrath was even deeper when she realized that this was the public school, and she indulged


"AND·DOT·"

in the fiercest of curses under her breath. But for a time, at least, her purpose had been foiled by the presence of the maid and of the other children, and she was forced to wait for a better opportunity. She carefully noted the entrance to the building, and then secreted herself in a clump of shrubs opposite to it.

For over an hour she waited, hugging her wrath and her cruel scheme to heart. Finally the children came out again for their few minutes of recess. They filled the playground and the street, a merry crowd, running, playing, skipping ropes, and chattering. A group of laughing girls came toward the soiled woman hidden in the shrubbery. She fairly held her breath as she recognized in the youngest her own daughter. All unconsciously Tess and her mates neared the shrubbery and stopped a moment to watch a passing butterfly. So near was Tess that Bridget could have touched her had she dared. At that instant the bell rang for their return to their studies, and with a last merry shout all started for the school-house. All? All but one, for as the others turned, a rough hand suddenly grasped little Tess, while another hand clutched her lips and stifled her frightened cry. In the same instant Bridget had drawn the struggling child down under the foliage. Nor was she missed until the others had reached the school-room and the teacher pointed in surprise to the empty desk. No one knew where she had gone, but laid her absence to sudden sickness or some childish misdemeanor. An older pupil was sent to seek her in the playground, but by that time Bridget was far away, hurrying through by-streets and dragging with her the sobbing child.

When Bridget reached her home she shut and bolted the door. Then the vials of her wrath were opened. In a voice terrible to the sensitive girl she demanded:—

"Who take you dere?"

"Mr. Rossi," sobbed Tess.

"How long you go dere?"

"Seven weeks." Tess was now shaking with fear.

"How long you go to de Mish'n?"

Tess gasped. Her mother knew it all, then.

"How long you go dere?" repeated the mother, in still more threatening tones.

"I — I dunno."

"How long?" cried the woman, with thundering emphasis.

"I — I t'ink a mont'."

"W'ere yer fader gone?"

"He's gone to get shet of de drink. He's goin' to be good an' work. O mamma, don't whip me!"

The woman's fury could contain itself no longer. The child's piteous appeal was wholly in vain. Savage blows fell upon her thick and fast. At last the fragile child could endure no more, and she shrieked in agony. Then Eileen Ryan came to the locked door and pounded on it.

"Let up dere, Bridget Terry," she called. "If ye don't stop dat 'ere beatin' o' Tess I'll send fer de police."

Still the beating went on.

Eileen was angry, and she struck the door until it rattled.

"D'ye hear, ye wench? Stop dat er I'll call de police dis minnit. Ye beat dat girl enough."

Bridget at last desisted, and opening the door, she dragged the suffering child after her. Eileen stood in her own door opposite.

"Wot ye goin' to do wid her?" she demanded.

"None o' yer bizniss. I'll take her w'ere she won't do no more Protestant tricks in one while."

Eileen watched the woman go down stairs, and then, catching up her shawl, she followed nimbly after. She had just reached the street when she saw Bridget slip through the side gate into the church-yard. Eileen peered over the gate and saw her pass behind the church into the yard of the parish house. Here she went down the basement steps and into the priest's house. Eileen sauntered up to the square, rounded the corner by the church, and stood in a doorway opposite the front of the priest's house. Soon she had the satisfaction of seeing Bridget emerge from his reverence's front door, and steer a straight course for the nearest saloon.

Frank Rossi had just sat down to lunch when the maid entered the dining room with Ted.

"Tessie is not there, Mr. Rossi," she said. "I have looked everywhere for her, but I cannot find her. The teacher says that she has been missing since recess. No one saw her go away, or seems to know anything about it."

Frank and Margaret rose excitedly from the table. Ted was sobbing against the maid's arm.

"Tessie gone!"

"How could she do such a thing?" said Rossi.

"Surely she has not gone of her own free will," said Margaret. "Someone has enticed her."

"Can it be that her mother has taken her?" asked Rossi. "Ted, has your mother been here to see you?"

"No, sir," said Ted.

"Have you seen her anywhere?"

"No."

"Did you see anyone when you were on the way to school, or at recess,—anyone whom you used to know?"

"No, sir, nobody at all."

"It must certainly be the mother's doings, Frank. I cannot believe that Tessie would run away."

"I am afraid that you are right, dear. I will go down at once to the Corners and see if she is with her mother. In the meanwhile do not lose sight of Ted for a moment. Let Anne stay with him all the time. I want to find out what this means."

Rossi hurried away and went directly to Tessie's home. The door was open, and looking in, he saw Bridget sitting beside the table with a bottle of whiskey in front of her. She was dirtier than ever. Her hair, uncombed, hung down over her shoulders, and her dress was disordered and filthy. A glass of liquor was trembling in her hands as Rossi entered.

"Mrs. Terry," said he, "is Tessie here?"

Bridget looked at him drowsily. All past events were forgotten.

"Wot's dat? Wot ye say?" she asked, dimly conscious that a stranger was in the room.

"Is Tessie here? Your daughter, is she here?"

"Tess? Tess?" she repeated, vacantly. She was too drunk now to even remember her wrath.

Again Rossi repeated his question.

"Tess? W'ere's Tess? Yeh, I say, w'ere's Tess?" She laughed idiotically, as if she had given voice to a witticism.

Rossi turned away helplessly. If she knew her child's whereabouts she was too drunk now to tell anyone. He turned and knocked at Eileen Ryan's door, but Eileen did not answer the knock; for while her tongue was loose enough among her Catholic neighbors, she did not care to incur the displeasure of the priest by telling the Protestant Rossi what she knew.

And so he was forced to go down into the street again without having gained the information which he sought. Here he saw a group of children whispering excitedly near him, but they fled precipitately when he spoke to them. This surprised him, for even in the days of their bitterest persecution the children had been friendly to him when they met. His suspicions were aroused, and he set himself to make inquiries in various places, but still gained no answer to his problem. He then went to police headquarters and sent out an alarm for a lost child, but nothing came of it. He then put the matter in the hands of a detective, and there the matter rested. Late in the afternoon he went to the Inebriates' Home to tell Patrick, but found that Patrick had left the home a month

before, perfectly sober and professing conversion, from which time nothing had been heard of him at the institution. This news somewhat reassured Rossi, for he concluded that Patrick must have taken the child himself, and would probably appear soon to tell them so. But he could not understand what motive the man would have for taking her surreptitiously.

But two weeks passed and no news had come of the child. Then as Rossi sat at his desk in the Mission one afternoon he looked up and saw Patrick coming toward him. He would scarcely have recognized him had he not been accustomed to seeing such transformations in reformed men. Patrick now was clean and well-dressed. His eye was clear, his speech distinct and ready. He showed at once the manner of man he had been before his fall. More than that, he carried himself with a manliness and self-respect which was new to him. Rossi rose to meet him and grasped his hand heartily, and with a distinct sense of relief.

"Well, Terry, this is a surprise. I am decidedly glad to see you."

"I am glad to see you, Mr. Rossi." He had forsaken his old dialect, and spoke once more the pure English of his youth. "You did a very great kindness to me, and I am grateful for it."

"You have changed for the better, certainly. Be sure to stick to it, and you will be all right."

"I will! I will!" said Terry, heartily. "I am determined to lift up my family, also. When I left the home I went to an uncle of mine who lives in Portville, and he gave me employment, and I have now come back to get my family and take them to a respectable home. I have earned the money for it. My children shall not want for food or clothes again while I live, God helping me."

"But you have Tess with you already, have you not?"

"Tess? No. I have not seen her yet"

"Is she not with you? Have you not seen her at all?"

"No, certainly not. I have just arrived from Portville, and I came straight to you."

A look of dismay and grief passed over Rossi's face.

"Well, then, I have very painful news for you," he said. "Tess has disappeared."

"Disappeared! Great heavens! When? How?"

"That is what we all want to know. She was at school with Ted two weeks ago to day, and after recess nothing was seen of her, nor can I get any clue to her whereabouts. Unless your wife knows, no one knows,— or at least they will not tell it. But Mrs. Terry —

pardon me — has been so much under the influence of liquor that I cannot induce her to tell whether she knows or not."

Patrick groaned aloud.

"The children have been at my house ever since you left, and Ted is still there, closely watched. Their mother gave her consent to their visit with me, and, so far as I know, she has not objected since. I have informed the police of Tess' disappearance, and am still employing a private detective. But thus far we have learned nothing from any source."

"I will go to my wife at once," said Patrick, "and I will see if she can explain this thing."

Patrick hurried to his wretched home. Bridget had not awakened from her last orgy, and lay slumbering stupidly on the couch. Patrick, sick now with the sight of the filth and poverty in which he had so long lived, approached and laid his hand on his wife's arm. But Bridget paid no heed. He called, and finally shook her, but she was still too stupid to answer him. Wetting his handkerchief in cold water, he passed it over her face, and at last the reviving touch of the water roused her, and she opened her eyes and sat up.

"Who are you?" she asked, drowsily.

"Who am I? Don't you know me, Bridget?"

"Naw, I don't know ye," she answered, and began to sway, as if she would fall asleep again. "If I knowed would I be axin'?" She tumbled down on the couch.

"Come, Bridget, wake up. I am Patrick. Come, look up at me."

Bridget roused herself with difficulty.

"Patrick? You Patrick? Naw, you ain't Patrick. Patrick ain't so foine as ye be," and her eyes began to droop again.

"Bridget, where is Tess?" demanded Patrick, sternly, realizing that he must lose no time.

"Tess? Tess? Ha, ha! Ast Fader O'Hara w'ere Tess is. He'll tell ye, or maybe he won't tell ye. Ha, ha!"

"O'Hara! Is Tess with him?" cried her husband in alarm.

"Fader O'Hara. He! He!" laughed Bridget, incoherently.

"Bridget, did you take Tess from Rossi?"

"He! He!"

"Tell me. Did you take Tess from Rossi?"

But she did not answer. While he waited her face grew slowly gray, and her bloodshot eyes were suddenly glassy and fearful in expression. Patrick seized her just as a convulsion shook her from head to foot. He called out in his alarm, and Eileen Riley came hastily to the door. He motioned to her to help him, and then the

strength of both was taxed to its utmost to hold the tormented woman, for she struggled and shrieked like a lunatic.

The neighbors gathered quickly in the hall, and it was evident to all that Bridget was suffering from that worst of all evils of drink, —delirium tremens. At Patrick's request someone called an ambulance, and after half an hour of desperate fighting the crazed woman was overpowered by the doctors, put into a straight-jacket, and carried away to lie in the padded cell of a hospital.

When she had gone, Patrick looked sadly around on his miserable home, so terribly cursed with disaster, and prayed from his inmost soul for strength to resist the evil that had chained them all, and for grace to win back his troubled family. Then, locking the door, he went out.

CHAPTER IX.

In taking possession of Tess, Father O'Hara was inspired by two motives; first, to annoy Rossi, and second, to prevent the child from becoming a Protestant. When Tess was put into his hands he had no definite purpose in regard to her, and he merely turned her over to the sisters of charity who taught the parochial school in the house next door to him on Cabot Lane. He bade the sisters keep the child in an upper room, and not let her presence be known to anyone. He expected Bridget to bring Ted, also, and he had leisurely concluded that he would send them both to an institution as soon as he should secure Ted. To do him justice, he expected that both Patrick and Bridget would very soon fill drunkards' graves, and that the children would ultimately fall into the care of an insti, tution anyway, and he was glad to forestall the Protestants and effectually prevent them from getting the children. He was scarcely expecting, therefore, the complications which eventually arose from his act.

When Patrick left the tenement from which his wife had just been carried forth, he went directly to the priest's house. O'Hara d d not recognize him.

"I am told that Tessie Terry is here, sir, or that you know where she is. I want to get her at once."

"An' who may you be?" asked the priest.

"I am her father."

O'Hara gave him a sharp look.

"So you've got back again, have ye, me good Patrick?"

"Yes, I came back this morning. I want to take my family to a respectable home. I have stopped my drinking, and God helping me, I will never touch another drop. I mean to take better care of my family in future. So if you will be kind enough to tell me where my daughter is, I will take her away."

Not so fast,—not so fast, Patrick. O'Hara is not ready yet.

"Where have you been?" asked the priest.

"When I left here I went first to the Inebriates' Home. Since then I have been at work for my uncle in Portville."

"That home's a Protestant place, ain't it?"

"Yes," admitted Patrick.

"What in —— did ye go there for to damn your soul?"

"I did not go there to damn my soul," said Patrick, with quiet sarcasm. "I went there to get the power of God to help me to give up drinking, and I got it."

"You got eternal damnation," exclaimed the priest. "Your wife's the only true Catholic, an' Dennis. You're a heretic, an' you're makin' your children heretics."

"I am not a heretic. I have just as much of the truth as you have. I will tell you now that I am no longer a Catholic. I am a Protestant, and I have joined a Protestant church. You cannot control me any longer. If my wife wants to be a Catholic, she may; but my children shall be Protestants."

"Your children shall not be Protestants," roared the priest. "The whole church shall prevent it. You shall not dare to take them from the true church."

Patrick had risen now, pale, but self-controlled.

"Father O'Hara, I want my daughter. I will thank you to tell me where she is."

"You shall not know. You shall never know until you come back to the true faith. You are a cursed heretic."

"I demand to know. I *will* know," said Patrick, between his set teeth. "Ill have the power of the law to help me, and you *shall* give up my child."

As Patrick left the priest's house, Paulo Colombo saw him and followed into the Mission. Patrick told his experiences to Rossi, while Paulo stood outside the door, listening intently. When the recital was finished, he stepped boldly inside and said:—

"Mr. Rossi, I kin tell ye w'ere Tess is. She's in de sisters' house w'ere de school is. Maggie Ryan knows it. Her moder seen Mis' Terry take her dere. An' dis mornin' Maria Costello went to de sisters' house to get somet'in', an' she seen her up de stairs, an' de sister she run quick an' pushed her back, an' Maria Costello, she couldn't say not'in', fer she drove her back."

"In the sisters' house!" exclaimed both men at once.

"Yeh, she's dere fer fair. Only nobody dassent tell ye, fer fear o' de priest. If ye do somet'in dat he don't like fer sure, he's awful mad with ye, an' he don't never fergive ye any more."

"I'll have her to-night," said Patrick. "I'll force them to open the doors for me, or I'll break them open."

"You can try it," said Rossi. "But I am afraid you will not succeed without a search warrant. The sisters probably will not dare to deliver her to you without the priest's orders. But you can try. I will go with you, and if we do not succeed, we can secure a warrant the first thing in the morning."

The men crossed the square and ascended the steps to the sisters' house. They rang the bell, but the door was not opened. Only a panel behind an iron grating was pushed aside, and a sister's face appeared.

"I have come for my daughter, Theresa Terry," said Patrick.

A look of fear crossed the woman's face, and she instantly dropped the panel, nor could she be induced to raise it again. The men endeavored in vain to be heard, and rang the bell loudly, but to no purpose except to gather a promiscuous crowd in the street. They therefore gave up the attempt and retraced their steps.

"All you can do now is to see a lawyer, and get a search-warrant," said Rossi.

To this Patrick consented, but it was already late, and must perforce be postponed until morning. Rossi took the reformed man to his own home, and Margaret gave him a hearty welcome.

Little Ted was in the room when his father arrived. Ted had greatly changed for the better since he was taken from his miserable home. He was no longer the precocious lad of the streets, but a natural, hearty boy. He did not at first notice his father, but when Patrick turned toward him and held out his arms, Ted hesitated but a moment, for one look in the familiar blue eyes convinced him. He sprang toward his father with a glad cry.

"O dad, you've got shet of the drink!"

"Yes, Ted," said his father, "I am through with drink forever, God helping me."

Ted's joy knew no bounds.

"You're just like Uncle Rossi now. You're a gentleman, father."

A sob of shame and pain choked Patrick, and Rossi and his wife walked away. Ted examined his father's coat, his hat, his shoes, and then looked at his white cuffs, while his appreciation increased.

"Yes, sure, father, you're a real man now, like all the men up

here. I am so glad, and Tessie will be so glad. Oh, father, where is Tess?" His happy tone suddenly ended in a note of pain.

"Tessie is in the Catholic school. But I am going to get her to-morrow."

"Oh, will you? Will you bring her back again? Oh, dear, good father, I'll be so happy. I'll be a good boy always, like Uncle Rossi wants me to be, if you'll only bring Tess back again."

"We shall have her to-morrow, my son."

"Are you going to work now, father, like Paddy's father works? Tess said you would."

"Yes, Ted. I have been working already, and I have come back to get you and Tessie and mamma and Dennis to take you away to a new home, a good home like we used to have before you were born."

"Oh, I am so glad. Won't that be nice?" But when he said it, his face clouded. "Is mamma just the same?" he asked, slowly.

A pang shot through Patrick's heart.

"Mamma is very sick. She has gone to the hospital," he said. "But when she is well again, she will be good, too, I hope, and not drink any more."

"And Dennis, will he be good, too? Will he leave de—I mean *the*—saloon, and not mix the drinks any more?"

"Yes," answered his father, decidedly. "I shall take him away from the saloon to-morrow, and he shall never enter another as long as he lives, if I can prevent it."

"I think that will be most as good as heaven," said Ted, with a sigh of satisfaction. "Don't you think I talk — no, *speak* — a great deal better than I used to speak? Everyone tries to teach me to speak correctly now."

"Yes, my son, I am proud of you."

"I go to the public school, too, only it's closed now, because it's vacation. And I am learning ever so many things. All the boys in the public school are just as smart as can be. They are all like George Duane, him that's George *Washington* Duane. Do you know him?"

"No, I don't know him."

"Why, he's the American boy, father. He knows almost as much as anybody. He's the smartest boy in—in the whole world, I guess."

"Well, then, he is decidedly smart, surely," said his father, smiling.

"And I am trying to be just like him; and I study, and every day Aunt Rossi tells me my lessons, and some day maybe I'll know

as much as George does, and all the other American boys. Have you seen my new bat? I've got a ball, too. And Anne plays with me every day, so I won't be lonesome till Tessie comes back. Anne isn't as good as a boy to play with. Her legs are too short to run good, and she's too fat. She gets out of breath. But then she tries, and I just play right along anyway. Harry Hollis is coming to play with me to-morrow. I like him. He lives over there. See, there is his house between the trees. But when he comes I have to be so very careful not to say *de*, or anything that is not nice, for he don't talk that way. He talks good, he does, and all the children in the public. Tess don't talk so good as me. Aunt Rossi says it is harder for her to learn, for she is older than me. Tessie has been gone so long, father. Don't you think she has been gone a very long time? Will you get her right away to-morrow, before breakfast?" and Ted scanned his father's face anxiously.

"Not before breakfast, because I must go the judge first. But I will bring her as soon as I can."

"Well, then, just as quick as ever you can, because I'll wait for her. I won't play ball until she comes. Tessie likes to play ball, she does, father. Why, she can play most as good as me. Harry says she's a regular batter, for sure."

Rossi and his wife had passed into an adjoining room, leaving Patrick and his boy together. Rossi told his wife the events of the day, and that Tess was in the parochial school building.

"Oh, I do hope we shall soon have her here again. Poor little Tess!" said Margaret.

"I hope so. Terry, as the father of the child, has a right to demand her, and he will, of course, succeed."

"And yet I am afraid, Frank. Sometimes, when I think of all that the priests have done against us, I feel afraid. You remember how they have tried to break up our work, and that the Catholics endeavored to kill you. If it is the priest who has taken Tess, I am afraid. What may they not do? It seems sometimes as if they dared to do anything. I wish I felt as confident as you do that we shall soon see Tess again."

"My dear, there are limits to what even a priest may dare to do. Our laws protect a father's rights, and I do not believe that O'Hara, however bad a man he may be, will dare to oppose the law."

"I wish I felt sure that he would restore her. I hope that your effort to secure her will not rouse their animosity toward you any further. Oh, Frank, if they should hurt you I think I could not bear it."

Rossi took her in his arms and looked lovingly into her face.

"Dear Margaret," he said, "nothing can come to me except what God wills. Surely neither you nor I wish to quarrel with His will."

"No, I do not mean to do so, Frank But oh, I hope He will not permit you to be taken from me."

"Do not cry so, Margaret, dear wife. It is not likely that anyone will trouble me or do me an injury. Are we not all equally in danger? We counted the cost before we went there, did we not? Besides, this is not like you to grieve before trouble comes. Be comforted, dear wife, our Heavenly Father is over all."

She hushed her sobbing, for the comfort of his strong arms about her brought reassurance.

"If only we may find Tess again, I shall be less anxious," she said.

That evening Rossi took Terry with him to the club-room, for the Pure Government Club had announced an important meeting that night. The political campaign in Bay City was now well advanced, and both parties were carefully weighing their chances of success. In Ward B the Falenites had exerted themselves as usual, but the stubborn fight made by the Pure Government Club had given them a great deal of trouble, and had forced some dark clouds across the clear sky of their firmament, and occasionally threatened to obscure it altogether. The Falenites at headquarters had been obliged to send money into the district a long time before election day, an unprecedented event, in order to push the campaign, and to help their workers to make a public showing that approximated Rossi's in some degree. In the meantime, the Pure Government Club had been quietly doing some most efficient work. Colombo and Costello had been canvassing the naturalized vote, and they succeeded in winning over enough of the naturalized voters to thoroughly alarm Fathers Arroll and O'Hara. But the most satisfactory, and in the long run the most enduring, work was done among the native Catholics. No one could tell certainly just how many men had been affected, but every night witnessed new enrollments on the club lists and new pledges to vote for an honest administration, all of which meant just so much loss to the Falenites.

While the anti-Protestant feeling was at its height, as a consequence of the priest's attack on the Rossi Mission, the supporters of the Pure Government Club did not deem it wise to make any public demonstration, and so for two months they contented themselves with their canvassing, and frequent in-door meetings.

But now they concluded that the time had come for active outside work again, and they contemplate another parade. Their

license had been immediately renewed after their previous trouble, and the club men believed that there would be no further interference with their plans. To-night's meeting had therefore been called to arrange for this demonstration, and a full attendance was expected.

Villars joined Rossi and Patrick on their way to the Corners, and all discussed the political situation freely. Patrick was much interested, and when they reached the club-rooms he at once signed their rolls as a member. He then started for McGorge's saloon, intending to take Dennis away. But Dennis was not to be found, and McGorge vouchsafed no information as to where he was. Patrick was therefore forced to return to the club-rooms.

Micky Healy and George Duane were sitting on the curb-stone. Micky looked rather glum, but George was telling all he knew, and possibly more, about military tactics, when Villars appeared in the doorway.

"Say, mister," said Micky, desperately, "give us a center."

"A what?" asked Villars in surprise.

"A center. Don't ye know wot dat is?"

"He means a cent," said George.

"Oh, is that it?" Villars looked down curiously at Mick. "What do you want a cent for?"

Micky hung his head. "Ter get somet'in' to eat," he said in a low voice.

"What's that?" Villars had not heard him.

"He says 'To get something to eat,'" said George.

"Something to eat! Come now, Mick, no tricks."

"'Tain't no trick," said Mick, indignantly.

"Say, are you really hungry?" asked Villars.

"Yeh, I am."

"All right then, here's five cents. Mind you don't spend it for anything else."

Micky's eyes gleamed with pleasure as he caught the nickel, and he sped away through Cabot Lane as fast as his legs could carry him.

"Say, George, just follow him up and see what he does," said Villars.

George darted after the fleeing boy and watched him enter a cheap restaurant some blocks away. Micky climbed to a high stool beside a still higher counter, and putting down his money, he asked in a tone of authority for soup "wid de grub in it." He soon received a bowl of steaming stew, which he proceeded to devour with alacrity. George returned to Villars and reported.

"So he was really hungry," said Villars. "Where does he live, anyway?"

"I guess he don't live anywhere much. He's only got his father since his grandmother died, and his father don't seem to live anywhere in particular."

"He don't! Where does he sleep?"

"Oh, he sleeps around in the lodging-house, or with Ryans. But mostly he sleeps in the trucks when he's out of work."

"Where does Micky sleep?"

"Micky? Oh, Micky sleeps in the trucks, too, or in a hall. I guess Mrs. Ryan sometimes lets him sleep in her house."

"Where does Micky board?"

George laughed. "He don't board anywhere. I guess he'd be expressly glad to board somewhere, but he hasn't got any chink."

"Does his father know that he comes here to the club?"

"I guess not. Only Tony's father and Paulo's knows. My mother knows, too. But then, she's American. I tell you what, my mother ain't any for'ner, my mother's American. She was born in Connecticut, she was. My mother's a lady. She ain't none of the starched-up kind, neither. I tell you what, Mr. Villars," and George looked up at his auditor in very serious earnestness, "my mother's a good lady, the very best kind of a lady in this world, because she's good, she is. I'm just glad to death about my mother. Why, I wouldn't give my mother for all the schools and colleges in this country, and I tell you what, outside of mothers, schools and colleges is the best things in the world, and you can't get to be president without them. Don't I know?"

"You do seem to know some things, that's a fact. But what are you talking about being a president for? Are you going to run?" and Villars' eyes twinkled with amusement.

George looked a trifle discomfited by the chaffing, but recovered himself and answered:—

"Well, Mr. Villars, I guess I stand a show."

"That you do, my boy," and Villars clapped him on the shoulder. "You stand just as good a show as any boy born under the Stars and Stripes, and a great deal better show than some, I admit."

Wendell stood near, listening.

"Do you intend to go to college?" he asked.

"Why,—why, I'll tell you, Mr. Wendell, I don't know. You see, it's just this way. Now, if you won't laugh, I'll tell you. But it ain't right to laugh about this. I want to go, and I can't very well get to be a lawyer without going, but I don't see how I can go. Now, I'll tell you. I'm praying about it. Only, of course, maybe the Lord can't very well let me go, because there's mother, and don't you

know, a fellow's mother is—is—why, she's his *mother*. And I say a fellow's bound to take care of his mother as long as he lives."

George's closing tone was very emphatic, as if he had long ago fought that battle out and gained the victory,—a victory that could never be reversed.

"And so you will give up going to college and running for president to take care of your mother?" said Wendell, putting the question deliberately.

"Well, I suppose so. It may work out that way." But he continued, brightly: "And then, again, there's Abraham Lincoln, he couldn't go to college, and there's Benjamin Franklin. Now Lincoln got to be president, and why can't I?"

"You are right, my boy," said Wendell, laughing good-naturedly. "Keep up a good heart, you may get to the White House yet."

At this moment Micky returned, his countenance expressing great satisfaction.

"What did you have to eat?" asked Villars, assuming an expression of serious concern.

"I eated a bowl o' soup wid de grub in it," said Micky, smacking his lips.

"How often do you eat?"

Micky looked as if that was a hard question to answer, but his Irish wit was not long obscured.

"W'en I gets it," and he nimbly turned a hand-spring on the sidewalk.

After the general laugh had subsided the men went inside to begin their meeting.

The boys were greatly excited over the prospect of the parade. They had owned their uniforms more than a month, and had never worn them save in the club rooms at some special meetings. This, as any one knows, was a grievous trial to a small boy, and they now hailed the prospect of a parade with unbounded joy. And when the boys, listening on the stairs, heard that in the plans for the march the juvenile club was detailed to lead one of the divisions as a fife and drum corps, their enthusiasm knew no bounds, and everyone stood on his head and clicked his heels in the air in sheer delight.

They practised and drilled assiduously, and were thoroughly determined that their part of the proceedings should be performed with brilliancy and dignity.

CHAPTER X.

When the sisters of charity took charge of little Tess they put her in one of their own small rooms on the upper floor of the parochial school building, and locked her in. Food was sent to her regularly, and at night one of them made a bed for her upon a cot. One of the sisters shared the room with her, so that the timid child was not alone at night. It was a long, weary afternoon to Tess. The sudden and violent separation from her friends, her mother's brutality, the pain of her bruises, the strangeness of her surroundings, and above all, her fear of the priest, combined to fill the child's mind with terror. For a long time she sat in the chair where the sister had put her, drawing her breath in short, gasping sobs, and starting at the faintest sounds. The silence and semi-darkness also frightened her. The room was bare of all furniture save a bed, table, and chair. There were no pretty curtains or rugs or brightly-bound books to give warmth and comfort to the scene, such as she had become accustomed to seeing in Rossi's home. The window was secured with iron bars, and the shutters were nearly closed. When Tess had cried until she had no more tears to shed, Nature gave her relief, and she fell asleep, nor wakened till the sister came at twilight with her supper.

When the frugal meal was eaten, Tess was bidden to undress, but the child's stiff and bruised limbs made it a hard task. The sister was not unkind, but bathed her wounds and bound them up. Then Tess knelt down beside the cot and began to pray, as Margaret Rossi had taught her. But the sister was startled at the simple words of the prayer, and exclaimed: —

"Who taught you to pray that way?"

"Mrs. Rossi taught me," answered Tess.

"The Protestant teacher?"

"Yes."

An expression of loathing overspread the woman's face, and she hurriedly crossed herself and muttered a prayer.

Tess bent her curly head and began once more. Now, however, the sister caught her roughly by the shoulder and bade her say the Hail Mary.

"I not pray to Mary any more," said Tess. "I'm a Protestant now."

A look of horror crossed the sister's face.

"No—no—you are no Protestant. You are a Catholic. Quick, say the Hail Mary."

"Oh, I can't say it," cried poor Tess.

"I will tell the priest. He will punish you."

"Oh, don't beat me any more," pleaded the child.

"Say the prayer, then."

"I can't say de Cat'olic prayer. But I will say 'Our Fader.' Oh, let me say 'Our Fader.' Please let me."

"The priest will beat you."

"O sister, I promised to be a Protestant. I promised sure. I can't be a Cat'olic again. Oh, don't beat me."

A bitter cry rang from her lips as the woman struck her. She fell over on her bed, and lay there sobbing until far into the night. Through the lonely hours she thought of her father, of Margaret, and dear Ted sleeping so happily in Rossi's pleasant home. She remembered her mother, and then the unwelcome image of the black-browed priest rose up before her again, and her bosom heaved and her bitter tears flowed afresh. At last she fell asleep, and when she wakened in the morning, the sister had already left the room, but food was waiting for her on the table. One of the blinds had been opened a few inches, and when Tess had dressed and eaten she sat down by the window and gazed up through the narrow opening to the white clouds floating by in the blue sky above her. Slowly the interminable hours dragged by until noon came, and then a heavy tread was heard in the hall, a key turned in the door, and Father O'Hara stood before the shrinking child.

"Come here," he said, sternly.

Tess rose and came tremblingly forward.

"Why don't you say the Hail Mary?" demanded the priest.

"I can't," faltered Tess.

"Why can't you?"

"Because I can't pray to Mary any more,—only to Jesus Christ."

"That's the heretic Protestant teaching," he cried, angrily. "Look here. The Virgin Mary is your friend. She pleads for you with her Son. You must pray to her. You cannot worship Christ without worshipping the Virgin Mary."*

"I love de Christ, but Mary only de woman."

"How do you know what Mary was? I tell you she was the mother of God. She was taken up body and soul into heaven, and she is the Queen of the Universe.† Why don't you want to pray to her?"

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* See the "Catechism of Catholic Doctrine," by Rev. Michael Muller, p. 290. "The veneration of Mary is inseparable from the veneration of Christ."

† See "Instruction for New Confessors," by Salvatori, p. 126.


·SAFE·
·HOME·

"Mary not God. Only Jesus is de God," said Tess, faithful to the truth which had enlightened her childish mind.

O'Hara swore.

"I'll teach you to disobey your priest," he said, striking her sharply on the head. "Now say that prayer."

"I — I — I'll say 'Our Fader'—"

"Say the Hail Mary."

"Oh, I promise to pray to Jesus. I promise not to pray to Mary. I can't."

O'Hara was thoroughly angry. He caught the child and shook her until her teeth chattered, and when he loosened his hold she fell to the floor from sheer exhaustion.

"Say it!" he commanded again. But Tess had no breath left for speech.

"The good sister will punish you until you do say it, me girl. You shall be tied to that chair for three hours. Do you hear?"

O'Hara left her, and the sister came and tied her in the chair, and for three long, weary hours the child sat in her cramped position, watching the shadows play back and forth upon the wall, as the branches of some tree waved in the sunlight and intercepted the few rays that penetrated through the partly-closed blind.

The following day was Sunday, and O'Hara did not inquire as to Tess' conduct until Monday. When he found that she had not complied with his command, he ordered the sister to fasten her in bed for a few days. This also was done, and for nearly a week the child lay upon her cot, tossing wearily about, and counting the slow hours. Then O'Hara came again.

"So you've made up your mind to say the prayers, have you?" he said, looking down at the pallid child.

"I pray to de good God every day," said Tess.

"And do you pray to the Virgin Mary, me little dear?" and for once in his life O'Hara tried coaxing instead of force.

"Oh, no," and Tess' lips grew white with fear. "I can't pray to Mary."

"By the holy saints ye shall! It's not me as will let a young un like you defy me. Do you see that now? How do you like the looks o' that? Do ye think that'll teach ye anything?"

Tess shrank back and cried out with fear as he held a thin switch before her eyes.

"See what pritty prisints I bring to the children that disobey me. Don't you want a taste of it? Begorra, ye shall have it whether ye want it or not."

He beat her mercilessly, and left her with great welts on her

thin arms and slender back. Then the sister came up and put an image of the Virgin Mary on the table and told her to be a good girl and say her prayers to it, and Father O'Hara would forgive her.

But Tess made no answer, only lay still on her couch hour after hour, sometimes sleeping fitfully, sometimes waking to moan and sob again. The following day she was undisturbed, and in the afternoon she ventured to look up at the Virgin. It was a pretty figure. Its face was very sweet, and the yellow hair was almost as pretty as that on the dear doll which Aunt Rossi had given her.

Oh, how the childish heart longed for some comfort! No one was near. She approached the table and lifted the image a little. It was not heavy, and it was, oh, so pretty! She took it down and held it. She went over to the window and sat in the broad sill and hugged the wooden figure close to her breast and kissed it. She patted its shining hair and white hands. She laid it back in her arms to see if the eyes would shut, but they would not, so she whispered softly to herself, "Baby isn't sleepy now," while a gleam of mother happiness stole into her sorrowful face. By-and-by she took the towel and wrapped the pretty doll in it, and all the long hours she rocked back and forth with her precious burden in her arms, and her sad heart found comfort. So absorbed was she in her new-found joy that she forgot her persecution, and when the sister entered at twilight, she held up her finger, saying softly: —

"Hush, baby sleep now."

The sister stood aghast. For a moment she was dumb with amazement. Then, snatching the image from the child's arms, she tore off the towel and rushed out of the room. Tess looked after her doll with brimming eyes, but she never saw it again, and for two days thereafter bread and water was the only food or drink allowed her.

And then O'Hara came again. Oh, the misery of that visit! In vain did the trembling child plead for mercy. Such men as O'Hara have no mercy to bestow. He went to the door and opened a closet in the hall. It was dark and narrow. A transom over the door permitted of slight ventilation, but the place was too small for even Tess to move about in. He lifted the child with one hand and dropped her in the closet, then locked the door and strode downstairs.

Tess lay on the floor of her narrow prison, her heart almost bursting with its load of fear and grief. The darkness was terrible to her, for she had been taught from babyhood that it was peopled with evil spirits and demons. The hot, close air became stifling, and perspiration dripped from every pore of her body. She was in

deadly fear of the priest's return, and every sound increased her terror. The moments seemed full of growing torture, and when at last, as night was falling, a sister opened the door, Tess was raving with delirium.

The woman called an assistant, and together they lifted the child and laid her upon her cot. But the little one shrank from them, and her screams and moans were heartrending. All the night long, and during the succeeding day and night, she still raved and moaned and tossed, and then, on the very day that her father came to claim her, she came back to consciousness again. But she knew nothing of the efforts of her father or friends to find her. Every day her eyes watched the door, hoping that someone would come to save her, but no one came, and her little heart was sorely tried. Often she had looked down from the high window, hoping to see some familiar face, but the iron bars held her back and she only saw the roofs of a few houses across the street. About noon of the day when she recovered consciousness, the door was accidentally left ajar a moment, and in the hope of escaping, Tess had summoned all her remaining strength and crept out into the hallway. Below her in the lower hall was a child whom she knew well. Tess tried to call to her, for she could go no further, but the sister had seen her, forced her back, and locked her in once more. Tess was too weak now to cry out or resist, and lay back upon her cot exhausted. But at midnight, to her surprise, the sisters came and dressed her, and carried her down the stairs and out into the street.

"Oh, will you take me to Aunt Rossi's?" cried the child, with a great throb of joy, as she felt the cool air on her face.

Instantly a hand was laid on her mouth and her voice was hushed. The women entered a carriage, carrying her with them, and they drove away. It seemed a long ride to the sick child, and she moaned with pain as the wheels jolted over rough cobble-stones. But at last the end of the journey was reached, and Tess was carried into St. Joseph's Home, a Roman Catholic institution for children. Here she was placed in the hospital ward, but no record of her entry was made upon the books of the institution, and when the sisters or attendants spoke to her, they called her Mary, and not Tess.

Dennis Terry was not in McGorge's saloon when his father came for him that night, for the very good reason that he had gone to the church to confess to O'Hara. The priest had sent for him to come and attend to his "religious dooty" without delay, and was even now hearing his self-accusations with much unction. When this was at an end, O'Hara informed him that there were wicked enemies

at work against his soul, who were conspiring to draw him into the heresies of the Protestants, and so bring to him eternal ruin and damnation. O'Hara cautioned him to have nothing to do with these foes. He further warned him that the temptation would come through his own father, who would seek to take him away from the true church and make him a heretic. Dennis therefore promptly foreswore his father's influence, and agreed to have nothing to do with that dangerous individual.

O'Hara then conferred a great honor upon Dennis by admitting him to his secret confidence, and giving him a true mission to perform for the church. He stated to Dennis that certain members of the congregation had gone away after political heresies, and were threatening to bring disaster to the interests of the church by voting against the great and good Falenites. He stated also that in order to guard the sacred interests of the holy church, it was necessary to know the names of these most wretched traitors, and also to know whom they were trying to draw away after their own delusions. He therefore set Dennis to spy upon the Pure Government Club that night to discover what Italians went in there, and afterwards to find out to whom those Italians talked during the following days. Dennis undertook this commission with alacrity, and when he departed from the sactuary he stationed himself in the shadow of a doorway quite near to the club-rooms, where he could note every person who entered them.

The first man to go in was his own father, just then returning from his fruitless visit to McGorge's. Dennis, with no compunctions of conscience, promptly made a note of the fact, and while he waited for the next comer, he had time to meditate on his sire's changed appearance. The next man whose name graced the spy's paper was Bartolo Valliri, whose children had attended the Rossi Mission. Then came a group of men who were Roman Catholics, but of native birth. Dennis recognized them as former adherents of the Falenites, and as they were men of intelligence, and rather above the ordinary residents of that part of the ward in ability and worldly possessions, Dennis was inclined to look upon his discovery as a truly important fact. Then Costello and Colombo appeared from within, and Dennis opened his eyes still wider, and made notes fast and furiously. Nor did he omit the fact that the two latter seemed to be responsible for the presence of a score or more of other Italians whom he now recognized through the open windows.

When the evening had passed Dennis felt that the priest's interests had not suffered at his hands, and he devoutly hoped that his spiritual father would be as cognizant of the value of his services

as he was himself, and so, slapping his note-book into his pocket, he took his way to McGorge's with much satisfaction.

Early the next morning, while waiting for the lawyer to come to his office, Patrick again visited McGorge's. Dennis was busy cleaning up the bar. He looked his father over calmly.

"Dennis, come over to the house, I want to see you," said Patrick.

Dennis promptly declined.

"I want you, my son. Do not refuse me."

"Naw. I ain't goin'." And Dennis turned to wait on a customer.

Patrick was irritated at this unexpected resistance to his paternal authority, but controlled himself. But as he watched Dennis fill the glass a sense of loathing for the foaming liquor overcame him, and his disgust was so great that he could scarcely remain in the place. He wondered how he could ever have loved the despicable beverage, and have neglected his wife and children for it. It filled him with shame to see his own son dealing out the foul stuff, and he would have liked to dash the cup from his hands. He waited with what patience he could command until the customer had departed, and then said to his son, who had deliberately turned his back upon him:—

"I cannot permit you to remain here any longer. I have a home now, and a good position. It is no longer necessary for you to work. I can give you an education now, and I wish you to have it. I want you to leave this place at once, and I will put you in school."

"Naw," said Dennis, comprehensively.

"But you must come with me, my son. I am your father, and you are still bound to obey me."

"Naw," again said Dennis.

"You cannot stay in this wretched place. I will not permit it."

"I likes me job all right. I ain't got not'in' agin it," said Dennis, with a satisfied grin.

"But you need an education. I want you to be a respectable man," urged Patrick.

"I ain't got no use fer no eddication. De liquor store is good enough fer me."

"I want you to be too good for the liquor store, Dennis. For your mother's sake, my son, leave this place."

"Me moder's no good," said Dennis, with a frown. "Ain't she in de orspital dis blissid minnit wid de D. T.'s? I ain't goin' to do not'in' fer her. I likes me job an' I'll stick by it."

"But you must come with me. I shall use my authority."

"You ain't got no 't'ority over me. Ye can't tetch me. 'Cause why? I'm solid wid de priest, an' ye can't tetch me. See?"

"What! Has O'Hara got his hands on you, too?"

"I ain't sayin' not'in' 'bout nobody gettin' no han's on nobody. Only I ain't goin' wid ye. See?"

"Answer me this, Dennis. Has O'Hara or any other priest forbidden you to obey me?"

"I ain't got no answers fer not'in'." And Dennis turned cheerfully to wait on a group of men who now entered the saloon.

Patrick turned away and left the place in despair. Evidently nothing but force would make the boy accompany him. But he determined that as soon as he could secure Tess he would use even force to bring his son to him, and to lift him up to a better life.

Patrick went with Rossi to seek the aid of an attorney to obtain Tess, and when the case was stated to him, he in turn accompanied the father and his friend to a judge to ask a writ of *habeas corpus*, which should be served upon O'Hara, directing him to produce the body of Theresa Terry in court on a certain day. After some hesitation and quibbling (for the judge was a Catholic), the request was finally granted, and the papers were accordingly served.

O'Hara smiled when he received the interesting notice, and did not doubt for a moment his ability to parry this thrust with entire success. He already knew that Bridget had been conveyed to a hospital, and feared no disclosure from so faithful a Catholic as she, even if she recovered sufficiently to make any statement. When the time came, therefore, for him to go to court, he went, and he went alone.

Patrick watched him as he came in, and his heart sank when he saw that his child was not with him. O'Hara stepped up to the judge and explained, with great politeness and evident deference, that no such child was in his care.

"I think your honor has been misinformed," he said, with admirable suavity. "Our school is simply a day school. We take no boarders, and therefore the child could not have been left with us. She was at one time enrolled among our pupils, but I have not seen her for some months, and can give you no information concerning her."

"You admitted to me three days ago that she was in your possession," exclaimed Patrick, hotly.

"He is mistaken, your honor. I simply told him that I could not recover his child for him. I do not know anything about her. I would certainly do all I could to help him if I knew where she was."

"That is a lie," cried Patrick, angered beyond endurance.

The judge rebuked Terry sternly and dismissed the matter forthwith. He also shook hands with the priest as he turned to leave, but gave scant attention to Patrick, or to his friend, Rossi.

Patrick was almost in despair. The attorney counselled him to see his wife first of all, and, if possible, wring from her some statement as to what she knew of the matter, and to also follow up the clue given by the boy Paulo. Patrick hurried to the hospital, but Bridget's condition was still precarious, and even her husband could not be permitted to see her. He then begged the physicians to notify him as soon as a change occurred, and regretfully left the hospital. Patrick was sorely tried. Remorse for his previous evil life, and most of all for the terrible trouble into which it had plunged his family, now preyed upon his mind. He accused himself bitterly. "If I had not used the liquor, Bridget might not have done so, and would not be where she is to-day. Nor would I have lost my child. Oh, my punishment is greater than I can bear!"

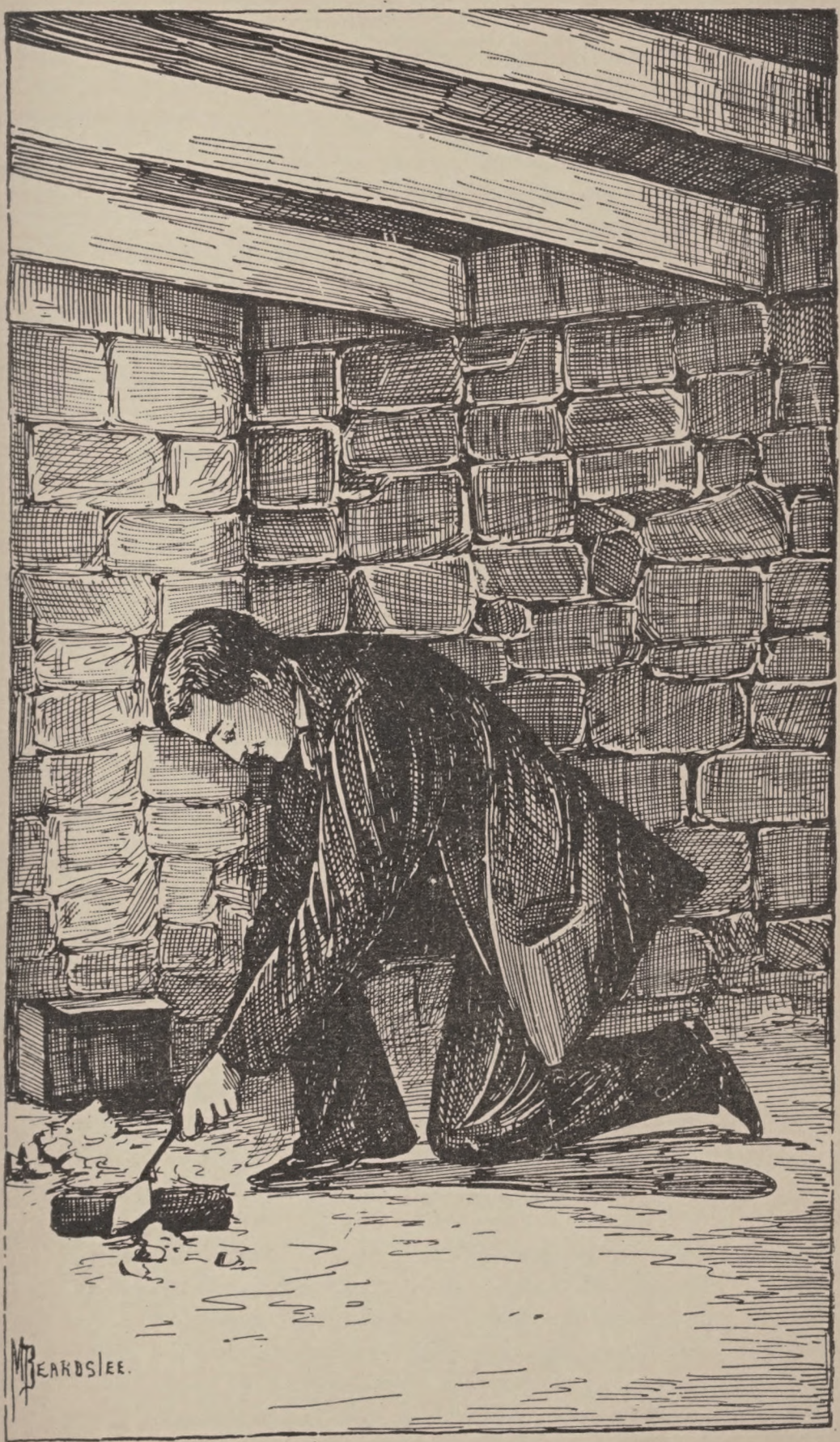
He pulled his hat down over his eyes as he walked through the city streets, that the passers-by might not see the agony written in them. "Dennis is corrupted," he cried. "My wife is at death's door. My daughter, O my little daughter, where is she?"

L. of C.

CHAPTER XI.

McGorge's was the most popular saloon in Ward B. It was looked upon by all as a model liquor store. McGorge paid his political dues to the Falen Club regularly. He took good care of his family, paid his debts, gave generously to the church, and was rather particular as to the matter of fights in his saloon. He kept what was called a "respectable place," and preserved its reputation largely by refusing to trust any penniless drunkards, and by that means he kept his place clear from them. He thus assumed a sort of virtue which passed current in his sphere for genuine and reliable righteousness. Because of these things, McGorge's was the rendez vous for Falenite leaders from all parts of the ward. To be sure he sold liquor to minors, and kept his back door open on Sundays, but his influence at headquarters was too strong for those little accidents to give him any trouble. If he had omitted his club dues at any time, or had failed to subscribe liberally to all the political picnics and assembly balls, or had forgotten to make nice little presents in cold cash to policemen and precinct captains, and incidentally to a few higher officials also, he might have expected trouble over those minor matters. But McGorge was wise in his day and generation, and always knew upon which side of his bread was placed the luscious butter.

McGorge kept a sharp eye upon the politics of his ward. Indeed, so faithful a watcher had he been that some of the leaders at headquarters had already intimated that he ought to be rewarded by some office, such as alderman or school director. McGorge was aware of this generous feeling at headquarters, and was not averse to receiving a recognition of his services. But he did not want an office. To tell the truth, he could not write, and had never read a book in his life, not even the whole of a First Reader. He therefore felt unequal to the honor, and — O commendable modesty! — declined it. In vain his over zealous admirers argued that such accidents of fortune would not unfit him for service,— McGorge still declined. This marvellous example of self-denial made him a sort of hero in the eyes of his associates, and still further increased his local authority. Do not think, however, that McGorge relinquished all emoluments. Far from it. He simply preferred some of the fat pickings in the way of cash payments for services rendered, and when he used his undeniable influence at headquarters, such services were always remembered by would-be office-holders in the most substantial and satisfactory manner.


M. BEARDSLEE.

When the Pure Government Club was organized, McGorge looked upon it with deep disgust. As he began to realize the extent of its gradually growing power, his loyal Falenite spirit strove within him with indignation. When he felt that he could bear no more, he betook himself to headquarters, and informed the high chief of the Falen Club of the state of affairs, and in no measured terms he expressed his own personal opinion thereof.

The high chief looked upon McGorge as his own son in the political affinity, and he therefore received the report with much sympathy for the injured underling. When he had affectionately consoled him with an assurance of eventual victory, he laid plans for the immediate confusion of their opponents, and promised to send one of their strongest men into the ward forthwith. He chose Murphy O'Donnell for the service, the man who had so willingly obliged Father O'Hara on a certain memorable occasion. To be sure, some Falenites had criticised him for that action, but it only endeared him the more to the hearts of Falenites in general, since they looked upon him as a martyr to the cause.

Promptly at nightfall O'Donnell appeared at McGorge's door, and was received with instantaneous enthusiasm. Of course he called everybody to the bar, and ordered drinks for the crowd. Nor until all had drunk the second time did he deem the soil sufficiently moist for the sowing of his political seed.

"Begorra, Misther O'Donnell, sure an' that's good liquor ye're a-givin' us," said Martin Riley.

"Whisht," said Thomas O'Herlihan. "Divil a bit do ye see wot he do be afther."

"An' wot's dat?" asked the crowd.

"Sure, he do be wettin' our whistles so we can squeal fer 'im."

When the laugh over this sally had subsided, McGorge took up the cue and said: —

"Sure, Misther O'Donnell is the most gin'rous man in the town. Wasn't it mesilf as see 'im las' night goin' through all the saloons on Broad street a-salutin' of his fri'n's until he hadn't a cint lift to take 'im home dacintly in his kirridge. Sure an' he had to take a common street car like the rest of us to roide up to his illigint marble risidince in"

Now it was well known that Murphy O'Donnell did not live in a marble residence, and a shout of laughter greeted this good-natured raillery, so that O'Donnell was obliged to treat all hands again to offset the joke. Then he repaired into a lodge-room behind the saloon, and the crowd followed him. He began to confer with a score or more of the influential men of the ward, whom McGorge had

privately notified during the day, and in the meantime Martin Riley mounted a stool and made a speech.

"Gintlemin and fellow-citizens," said Riley, "we all knows de gintleman in de stove-pipe hat wot lives in de marble risidince." The crowd laughed again. "We all knows he's come down to ripresint de true political fait' to us. If dere iver was a gintleman as was true to his political fait', sure an' dat gintleman's name is Misther Murphy O'Donnell."

"Yeh! Yeh!" shouted the crowd.

"He's de fines' man in de country, not exceptin' mesilf. I'm true to 'im, an' I'm hopin' ye'll be true to 'im. Begorra, I hope ye'll be dat true to 'im, dat if he axed ye to wote fer de wrong ticket ye'd do it." A shout of laughter greeted this jest. "He's workin' hard fer de party. Faix, an' he's workin' night an' day, an' niver stops to sleep at all, at all. I'm afeard he'll wake up some o' dese mornin's an' fin' 'imself stone dead."

When the shout that greeted this bull had subsided, the would-be orator continued:—

"Now, wot be ye goin' to do fer de party? Be ye a-goin' to wote de true ticket, wot stan's fer de laborin' man?"

"Yeh! Yeh! We will!" yelled the crowd. "Hurrah fer Murphy O'Donnell! Hurrah fer de ticket wot stan's fer de laborin' man!"

O'Donnell then mounted the stool and harangued his hearers for nearly an hour, urging upon them the necessity of voting for the Falenite nominees if they wanted to get work upon the new canal. It was an open secret that every man among them who voted for the Falenite nominees would be given work upon the canal, and they confidently expected it, and their political enthusiasm was correspondingly great.

When the speech-making was at an end, O'Donnell sought an interview with another powerful leader in Ward B, the priest O'Hara. The latter received him warmly. O'Donnell informed him of the reported breaks in their ranks.

"An' who do they say do be breakin' away from us?" asked O'Hara.

"They say that Rico Costello and Mariano Colombo are working against us, and have taken a lot of our men over to the other side."

"I'll be even with 'em," said the father, grinding his teeth with anger as he made a note of the names.

O'Donnell also said that a rumor was current that the Pure

Government Club was about to announce another grand demonstration.

"We must outwit them," said O'Hara. "We must get up a parade, too. By me soul, we must!"

O'Donnell regarded this as a wise suggestion.

"Now," continued O'Hara, "I'll say a word or two in the right direction, an' you get up the pirsission. Tell O'Herlihan an' McGorge to find out what night the blatherskites be goin' to have theirs, an' we'll set ours for the same night. By the saints, we'll give 'em enough to do."

O'Donnell agreed to this, and the next day preparations were quietly begun for a rival demonstration.

It is said in the words of holy writ that "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." The passage is not insignificant when applied to some who are accounted the Almighty's representatives on earth. Certainly those Roman Catholics of Ward B who fell into the hands of their priests during a certain political campaign, regarded it as a fearful experience, whose repetition was to be heralded with dread.

When Dennis Terry presented his list of recreant Catholics to Priest O'Hara, those whose names appeared thereon might well have hid themselves from his wrath. But, alas, they knew not what was in store for them.

Colombo and Costello had rendered purely gratuitous services to the Pure Government Club, and each was dependent upon his day's labor to provide food for his family.

Colombo owned a small bakery, and did business entirely among his Catholic neighbors. Costello was a shoemaker by trade, and worked for a Catholic firm that manufactured for the wholesale trade.

Before night on the day after O'Donnell's visit, Costello had been dismissed from his position, and within another twenty-four hours every customer had been cut off from Colombo's bakery.

When Costello reached home his wife was in tears, and told her husband between her sobs that the priest had visited her and declared that Rico had injured the church and sinned against his own soul by joining a wicked political club. He (the priest) declared that Rico must renounce the club, come to confession at once, and do severe penance for his sin.

Colombo was in his bakery when O'Hara entered it. The priest charged him fiercely with having forsaken his church, and of endeavoring to bring shame and hurt upon her.

"Me no doa dat at all," exclaimed the Italian, in amazement. "Me no hurta da church: me vota da odder ticket. Me no lika da Falena, dat all. Me no hurta da church."

"You are hurting the church and her interests, and bringing confusion to your own soul."

Colombo gazed at the priest in mute astonishment.

"We know what is good for the church, and we tell you which way to vote. You must leave that club at once, and bring back all the men you have taken into it."

"Me no doa," said Colombo, flatly.

"You won't do it? You will do it. You must do it. The church commands you to do it for the good of your own soul."

"Dat no hurta me."

"I'm the judge of what hurts you. I tell you to leave it. You're not to go to that club again."

"Me goa to-night," said Colombo, hotly.

"We will see. If you disobey me, the church will punish you."

"Me no hurta da church. Me lika you all right for da church. Me no lika you for da vota."

"But you will vote against the church. That club hates the church, and will do us harm."

"Da club no care for da church. Nevva say not'in' 'bout da church at all."

"But when they get in office they will hurt the church, and will not give us any money for our schools."

"Da church alla wanta da mon," said Colombo, angrily.

O'Hara turned to leave. His black brows were drawn into a fierce scowl. It was evident that he considered words were wasted on Colombo, and decided that action would have more effect, and he proceeded at once to visit judgment on his parishioner's head, with the result which we have already seen.

But there was one more flagrant violator upon whom O'Hara would pour the vials of his wrath,—Bartolo Valliri.

Valliri, his wife, and his children, had been among those who were publicly censured for attendance at Rossi's Mission, and in their case the censure had proved almost wholly unavailing, for after a short absence, they had voluntarily returned to the Mission, and had almost ceased attendance at Catholic services. O'Hara felt that the time had come to deal severely with Valliri, and as he approached the corner where Valliri's fruit-cart was standing a scheme suitable for his purpose presented itself to his mind.

Not far distant was his good friend O'Flaherty. The priest accosted the policeman and asked innocently:—

"Is there not a law against push-cart venders selling their wares on the sidewalk?"

"Yeh," said the policeman.

"Then why do you allow Valliri there to break the law?" asked O'Hara, severely. "You should do your duty as a good officer, and not get into trouble."

"But he pays his pertiction money," said O'Flaherty, blankly.

"Protection money!" cried the priest, with a great show of indignation. "Do you mean to say that you soil your hands with a bribe?"

With that his reverence passed on. O'Flaherty gazed on the retreating priest as if he thought the holy man had gone daft. But although he could not comprehend the matter at all, the hint was sufficient for him, and a moment later, poor Valliri was on his way to prison, where, because he could pay no fine, he spent several days.

This was a cruel blow to the Valliri family. Sickness and death had drained their slender means until it was only by the utmost exertion that they lived at all. The rent was already overdue, and the landlord had threatened to dispossess them. What Valliri made each day was put by to pay the rent, except the few cents which bought just food enough to keep them from actually starving. Since they had returned to the Rossi Mission many of their friends had forsaken them, and Valliri's small trade had shrunken to still smaller dimensions.

Worst of all, perhaps, while Valliri was in court, someone had stolen his cart and all his fruit, so that when he was finally released from prison, he had neither stock nor capital to buy more.

When he reached home his family were in a starving condition. In the meantime, the landlord, seeing that Valliri was unable to pay his rent, had promptly served the stricken family with a notice of ejectment.

Then O'Hara visited them.

"Are you ready now to confess your sins, and return to the true church?" asked the priest.

Valliri sat before his tormentor, the picture of misery and despair.

"Me noa bad Christian. But me have trouble,—verra great trouble," answered Valliri.

"You have been a very disobedient Christian. You have gone with heretics. You have taken your family to heretics, and have brought punishment on your souls."

But Valliri's wife cried out, between her sobs: "O we no do bad at all. We believa da Christ."

"You do not believe. You have gone in the way of heretics, and brought down judgment on your souls."

"O no, no," cried the unhappy woman again. Then, thinking to touch the priest with the sight of their misery, she pointed to the empty table and cried:—

"See,—looka da table,—not'in'. We no hava bread two, tree day. We hungry. Da girl hungry. Da baby cry, cry, alla da time. An' see,—see,"—she held the landlord's notice before his eyes. "Da papa (paper) maka da move. No mon, an' maka da move. How can move? W'ere we go? Oh, wotta for so much trouble?"

She flung her apron over her head and rocked to and fro weeping. The baby moved uneasily in the bed, and wailed,—a weak, pitiful cry. The girls, Louisa and Annie, sat sobbing in a corner, and looked at their parents with appealing, hungry glances.

"You have trouble because you have sinned. You have gone with heretics. You have forsaken the true church, and brought this judgment on yourselves," said the priest.

"O no, no, we no leava religion. We lova da Christ." protested the woman again.

"Yeh," said Valliri, "we lova da Christ verra much. He giva da much peace here,—oh, verra much peace here," and he laid his hand on his heart.

"Then why don't you come back to confession? Come back now, an' I'll forgive you."

"Me canna come back," said Valliri, simply.

"You can come back. You must come back, and bring your children."

"No, we no come back," said Valliri's wife.

"Then you shall have more trouble. The church will put you out and curse you, and your souls will be lost forever."

"No," said Valliri, and his face was almost radiant for a moment, as if he had forgotten his troubles. "Da soul no lost. Da Christ forgiva da sin.

"Then you shall have more trouble. By the holy saints you shall!"

"O no, no mora trouble," and Valliri shrank back with startled eyes, while his poor wife cried out in terror.

"If you come to confession and do penance for this, I'll forgive you, and you will have good luck again. But if you won't come, then by the saints in heaven, I'll make you."

But Valliri did not answer, and the priest went away. The stricken man only sat with his hands clasped about his knees, while the tears trickled slowly down his brown visage, and deep heart-broken sighs escaped him.

Whether or not Valliri knew who had instigated his persecution, I cannot say. If he did know, he never put his knowledge into words. He was essentially a meek man, and one of those who suffer without resistance. He and his wife had practically renounced Catholicism some weeks before, and now followed closely the teachings of the Protestant missionaries.

But Colombo was a man of different fibre. When several days had passed and no customers had entered his store, he went directly to Rossi.

"Da priest maka da trouble for every man. Nobody gotta da work. Valliri putta da jail, jus' coma back, no cart, no to eat, no mon, da landlord putta da sidewalk to-morra. Me no sella da bread for five day. Every man dat coma da club jus' da same. Alla havva da trouble,—no got to eat."

Rossi was deeply moved. He accompanied the man to Valliri's home. reaching there shortly after the priest had left.

Valliri sprang up from his chair at the sight of a friend's face.

"Valliri, is this true? Are you really suffering?" Rossi asked in Italian.

The man could only bend his head, for the relief of his friend's sympathy was so great that he could not speak, but his poor wife broke forth with the pitiful story, pouring out their bitter grief in the melodious phrases of their native tongue.

Without waiting to say more Rossi sent for food for the starving family, and, after promising Valliri temporary employment on his own premises, he advanced the money to pay his rent.

Then the missionary went from one to another of the Italians whom he knew, and confirmed Colombo's story of wholesale persecution against those who had allied themselves with the anti-Falenites.

On the rolls of the club were nearly three hundred names of Italian Catholics, and there had been a still larger enrollment of native Catholics, and the Falenites realized that unless some decisive measures were speedily taken there would be a very close brush between the two parties on election day. The priests, therefore, felt themselves entirely justified in the extreme measures which they had taken. From Dennis' list, and the confessions of the more fearful ones, O'Hara and Arroll had secured the names of nearly all who had signed the roll of the Pure Government Club. Then, partly by means of private emissaries, partly through the confessional, and in a few cases, such as Colombo's and Valliri's, by personal interference, these priests had administered punishment to the signers.

Rossi laid the matter before his friends in the club, and a committee was organized to distribute relief among those who suffered

from a boycott or from loss of employment. It was voted to pay Costello and Colombo for their services on behalf of the club, and this money helped them through the hardest of their trial. Through the influence of the club Costello was restored to his former situation. For Valliri work was found outside the city, and he and his family were removed beyond the reach of revengeful priests. It had been suggested early in the campaign that Colombo be engaged permanently by the club as its Italian agent, and since his business was now ruined beyond hope of revival, he sold out his tools and went into their employ.

But all who suffered under that unjust persecution could not be reached by the committee. Many were afraid to receive aid from them, fearing still greater tribulation at the hands of the church. Others at once renounced their independence in political affairs, and no longer attempted to oppose a power too strong for them. Still others who would gladly have supported the anti-Falenites were now frightened by the trials of their friends, and dared not make their preference known.

For a while it seemed as if nearly all of the effort put forth by the Pure Government Club among the foreigners must come to naught. They were almost surprised when some few remained true notwithstanding their trouble. Upon them intimidation, injury, and threats of excommunication had no effect, and men of such strength all reverence, for they are men indeed, and of such our country has need, from whatever land they may come.

But the bitter persecution of these foreigners forced the Pure Government Club to again postpone its public demonstration. The Catholics were afraid to admit their preference for the anti-Falenites openly for a time, and the club canvassers had to content themselves with unostentatious work. They therefore, much to the juvenile members' disgust, deferred their parade until near election time.

Of course, the priests did not intend that their attempts to coerce the foreigners should become known, least of all did they want the matter to furnish fresh campaign capital for their enemies. But the anti-Falenites of Ward B did not feel bound to secrete the matter, and it was quickly noised abroad. Patrick's trouble also became known. At the club men asked him if he had found his child. The children on the street whispered of "de girl de priest stole," and the foreigners looked at him curiously as he passed, wondering at the man who dared to fight the priests.

In a political speech given in another part of the city further prominence was given to it. A speaker described to an American audience the "persecution of the bolting foreigners of Ward B," and the abduction of Tessie Terry was cited as one of its incidents. Of

course the newspapers published all this, and the story of little Tess was discussed far and wide.

Reporters called upon O'Hara, but he strenuously and contemptuously denied all knowledge of the child, and characterized the story as utterly absurd and without foundation. His emphatic denial was placed by the side of interviews with Patrick, but since the latter had no positive evidence but that of the child, Maria Costello, opinion was about evenly divided on the matter. Some Roman Catholic sheets went so far as to declare it an invention for political effect, and hailed O'Hara as a martyr. As for the persecution of the bolting Falenites, that also was a campaign romance, at least so said the sympathizers.

Perhaps this would have been the end of the public's interest in Tessie Terry, had not a new and unexpected event put another phase upon the matter.

Patrick had visited the hospital daily, but Bridget raved like a maniac, and rational conversation with her was impossible. She knew no one; least of all, in his changed condition, did she know her husband. Seeing her failing strength, Patrick was depressed and discouraged. If she died without throwing any light upon the question of Tess' disappearance, it was useless to expect to fasten the guilt upon the priest, or to hope to force him to restore the child.

Patrick's faith was sorely tried. Fear for his daughter's safety oppressed him. Little Ted begged for his sister every day, and could not understand the delay. At last, after three weeks of waiting, there came a hurried summons from the hospital.

"Your wife is conscious, and her mind is clear; but she is dying. Come at once," said the message.

Patrick hurried away, while Rossi went for the attorney, intending to bring him to the hospital as quickly as possible.

Bridget lay on a cot in a padded cell, and a nurse stood beside her. When Patrick entered the dying woman looked at him curiously. He sat down beside her and took her hand in his.

"Wot's come to ye?" asked Bridget.

"I have stopped drinking, that is all. I wish with all my heart that I had never begun it, and you would not be here now, for you did not drink until I brought it in the house."

Bridget looked at him blankly.

"De liquor 's good enough," she said.

"No, Bridget, it has been a curse to me and a curse to you. Do you not see that it has? O wife, are you prepared to die?"

"Die! Who said I was dyin'?"

"I fear you cannot live long. Can you not look to the Saviour to cleanse you from sin and receive you into heaven?"

"Heaven!" said Bridget, vaguely. "W'ere's de priest?"

"He is not here. O Bridget, trust in Jesus Christ. The priest cannot save you."

"Yeh, he kin. He give de sacraments."

"But even they cannot save you. Only Christ himself can save you. He loves you, and longs to forgive all your sin. Will you not believe in him alone as your Saviour?"

"Naw," said Bridget, impatiently. "I wants de priest."

It was in vain that Patrick tried to make her dull brain comprehend the truth of the one sacrifice offered for the sins of many. She cared nothing for his words, and finally refused to listen to them. Then Rossi came with the lawyer, and in the presence of these witnesses, Patrick turned to the question of the disappearance of his daughter.

"Bridget," he said, "do you know where Tess is?"

"Tess? Tess?" she asked, in surprise. Then added with darkening brows: "Yeh, I knows."

"Where is she?"

"Wot be ye askin' fer?"

"Because I want to find her. I have money now to take care of her, and I want her."

The woman was not dead to all feeling for her child, and for a moment the sense of gratification at the promise of better things for her illumined even her dull mind. But the memory of her daughter's abandonment of her religion rankled bitterly in her mind.

"Where is she?" repeated Patrick.

The dying woman laughed. One almost heard the death-rattle in her throat.

"Bridget, where is she?" Patrick thundered the question forth in his anger and despair. The woman was frightened, and before she had time to regain her self-possession, she answered: —

"De priest."

"What priest? Father O'Hara?"

"Yeh," she said, sullenly.

"Did you give her to O'Hara?"

"Yeh," and she glowered at him with the ferocity of a cat.

"Did you steal her from school and give her to O'Hara?"

Bridget was furious now, and made no answer.

"Did you?" Again Patrick thundered the words forth.

Her fury turned to fear.

"Yeh," she answered, faintly. "He told me to."

"O'Hara told you to steal Tess and bring her to him?"

"Yeh."

"And you did it?"

"Yeh."

"Where is she now?"

"I dunno."

"Who knows?"

Bridget shook her head, as if to deny all further knowledge.

"Did anyone see you take her?"

Bridget's spite was roused, although she was growing perceptibly weaker.

"Yeh, de saints belay her! Eileen Riley followed me."

"Where did O'Hara put her?"

"I dunno."

"Did you ever see her afterward?"

"Naw."

"What did you do when you left him?"

"He give me a dollar."

"And you got drunk again?"

Bridget tried to laugh, but was too weak. At that moment the lawyer stepped forward.

"Mr. Terry, I have put your wife's statement in the form of an affidavit. Will your read it to her and ask her to sign it?"

Patrick read the statement to Bridget, and then gave her a pen. He feared that she would refuse her signature, but she did not. She placed her name below in as large letters as she could form. Then, with a leer, she asked for a sheet of paper, and wrote on it with shaking fingers: —

FATHER O'HARA,—Give Tess to her father. My last will and testament. BRIDGET TERRY.

The lawyer and Rossi left, now that their purpose was accomplished, but Patrick remained with his wife until her death, about an hour later.

In order to complete the chain of evidence against the priest it was necessary to secure the testimony of Eileen Ryan. Rossi hoped that she would speak freely. She had at one time attended the women's classes at his Mission, and he believed her to be friendly toward him. But he did not correctly estimate her loyalty to the priest. As it was past midnight when they left the hospital, he arranged with the lawyer to call upon Eileen early the following morning.

When Rossi and the lawyer appeared at her door, Eileen was

washing, and in no very amiable mood. When greetings had been exchanged and Eileen had wiped the dust from a couple of chairs that her visitors might be seated, Rossi said: —

"We have called, Mrs. Ryan, to ask you something about Mrs. Terry."

Eileen was undoubtedly cross.

"Sure an' I don't know not'in' about her. She's been in de orspital fer goin' on four weeks now."

"Yes, we know that. But we wish to ask you about something which she did before she went into the hospital."

Eileen's supicions were instantly roused.

"Bedad, an' I know not'in' o' my neighbors' bisniss one way or tother. I ain't never set no watch on Bridget Terry."

"Mrs. Ryan, we wish to know if you saw Mrs. Terry take her daughter Tessie and give her to Father O'Hara," said the lawyer.

"Me? Me see her give her away? I tell you I don't set no watch on my neighbors. Ner, I never set no watch on Bridget Terry."

"But Mrs. Terry says that you followed her."

This was a poser to Eileen, and she was obliged to indulge in ejaculations until she could rally from the shock.

"Me? De saints protict me! Me? Me follow me neighbors? Me dat's the moder o' five children, an' a respectable woman? Sure an' Bridget Terry never knowed who followed her. She was always dat drunk she wouldn't know if de imp was after her himself."

"But she states that you followed her, and has sworn to that effect before a notary."

"Sure an' wot has Bridget Terry got agin me to do such a thing? Me as was allus doin' fer her every day o' me life? I'll fix her, I will, whin she comes out o' de orspital wonst."

"She will never come out of the hospital, Mrs. Ryan, except to be buried. She is dead."

"Dead? Dead? O me heart, me frin's dead!" And because she did not know how else to parry the lawyer's uncomfortable questions, she wailed lustily for the woman whom she had just been threatening.

"Before she died," continued the lawyer, "she made an ante-mortem statement saying that she gave Tessie to Father O'Hara, and she also said that you followed her, and saw her go there. Now, Mrs. Ryan, we have no desire to get you into any trouble, as you seem to fear. We simply want to get possession of the child and restore her to her father. We only wish you to tell us the truth in this matter. To-morrow we will ask you to come on the witness stand and tell us just what you know of this matter. You need not be afraid. It will

not harm you in any way, and will help your friend's husband to get back his child."

"Sure an' I'll do not'in' o' de kind. Wot fer will I be swearin' agin me priest? Naw," said Eileen, her momentary tears gone and her eyes blazing with resentment.

"But you must come, Mrs. Ryan," insisted the lawyer. "This is not a time when you do as you choose. It is a matter of law, and a very grave case at that. You must come and tell us the truth. I shall summon you as a witness for the State, and to disobey that will get you into serious trouble."

The men left Eileen looking after them in open-mouthed astonishment. To say she was angry but feebly expresses the state of her mind. When they were safely out of sight and hearing she snatched her shawl and ran hurriedly to the priest's house, where she poured her tale into O'Hara's willing ears.

When she finished, O'Hara saw that he was in a bad predicament. Swearing did not help the matter any, so he finally forbore to swear. His first impulse was to put this witness out of the reach of any court of law in the State, but on second thought he decided that her disappearance might militate against him far more than her testimony, especially if he could manipulate that testimony to suit his own ends. After a little thought he therefore said:—

"Eileen!"

Eileen was all attention.

"They'll call on you to swear. You have got to take an oath. You'll have to swear you'll tell the truth an' nothin' but the truth. Now, it's no lie to swear for the good of the church. It's a virtue to swear for the good of the church."

"Yeh," said Eileen.

"Now, what are you goin' to tell 'em? You mustn't hurt the church. You must just tell 'em the truth without hurtin' the church."

"Yeh." Eileen quite appreciated the situation.

"Now, do you understand? You must tell 'em the truth, an' you mustn't hurt the church."

"Wot I tells 'em is no lie w'en I don't hurt de church."

O'Hara looked relieved. Eileen was an apt scholar.

"Yes. Now, you don't really know what you saw. It may have been Mrs. Terry, an' then again it may have been Mrs. Flannigan, or it may have been Mrs. O'Herlihan. *You don't really know what you saw.*"

Eileen nodded.

"An' then, again, it may have been Tess, or it may have been

Agnes Flannigan, or it may have been one o' them O'Herlihan girls. You ain't rightly sure who it was she took."

"Yeh," said Eileen.

"An' then, you don't know when it was. Like enough it wasn't that day at all. Maybe it was some other day, or some time last spring. You don't just rightly remember."

"Naw."

"An' then, you didn't see nobody give a girl to nobody. So you can't swear anything about it."

"Naw," and Eileen's eyes snapped with anticipated victory.

"An' what helps the church is no lie," said the priest once more, with special emphasis.

"Yeh," said Eileen, and went her way well satisfied.

CHAPTER XII.

Patrick arranged his wife's funeral and summoned Dennis to attend it. But when Dennis learned that his mother was to be buried in a Protestant cemetery and without Roman Catholic ceremonials, he positively refused to go. He did, however, go to the undertaker's shop and take a last farewell of the body. Dennis' refusal was another stab in the father's heart, and Patrick felt that his grief was hard to bear, as he and little Ted, alone of his family, followed the mother to her grave. For Patrick thought of his wife, not as the degraded drunkard, but as she was in her fresh young womanhood. When the lonely man returned from the burial he left Ted at Rossi's and hurried to the court-room.

Immediately after Bridget's confession, a second writ of *habeas corpus* had been served upon O'Hara, and this was the day set for the deliverance of the child.

It was with mingled emotions of hope and fear that Patrick entered the court-room. The trial was about to begin. O'Hara was there, accompanied by a lawyer and a group of hospital physicians. Patrick looked eagerly at the group, and scanned every person, but Tess was not there, and his heart sank like lead.

Wearily he turned toward Rossi and Hugh Dilkes, his attorney. Eileen was there, evidently a most unwilling witness. Dilkes arose and opened the case. He presented Bridget's affidavit and her letter

to Father O'Hara, and then offered the evidence of Eileen Ryan. Eileen went reluctantly to the stand. When the preliminary questions were asked and answered, Dilkes said to her: —

"Mrs. Ryan, I wish you now to state what you saw Mrs. Terry do on the morning of August 23d."

"Do? I didn't see her do not'in'. I don't mind me neighbors' affairs."

"Did you see Theresa Terry that morning?"

"Who is Theresa Terry? I don't know any Theresa."

"I mean the child who is called Tess. Did you see Tess?"

"Yeh, I see Tess."

"You saw Tess on the morning of August 23d, did you not?"

"Sure an' I see Tess mony a time, but I don't kuow as it was on dat day. I don't keeps no 'count o' de days."

"Well, never mind the day. Did you see Mrs. Terry take Tess to the priest's house?"

Eileen flung up her hands in distress.

"Och!" said she. "An' for what would I be settin' a watch on me neighbors? Sure an' I've me own bisniss to mind. I'm the mother of five small childer, an' I've me own bisniss to mind."

"You must answer my question," said Dilkes, sternly.

"Sure an' I'm answerin' ye. I've allus that much to do I've no time to sinse nobody's doin's. What with the childer—"

"Did you or did you not see Bridget Terry take her daughter to the priest's house?"

"Maybe I did, an' maybe I didn't. Sure an' I'll niver tell ye."

The judge addressed Eileen with much dignity.

"Mrs. Ryan, you must answer the question. If you do not you will be punished for contempt of court."

"Punished, is it? Sure an' I'm the mother of five small childer—"

"You must answer the questions which the lawyer puts to you or I will send you to jail."

Eileen did not want to go to jail, and she looked appealingly at O'Hara, but he gave no sign,

"Mrs. Ryan, tell his honor where you saw Bridget take Tess that day."

"She took her by—by—by de back way," said Eileen, in desperation.

"What back way?"

"Across de street."

"What street?"

"Washington."

"Across from your house?"

"Yeh."

"Where did she go then?"

"She went—she went—into de—How can I tell where she went?"

"You followed her, did you not?"

"Yeh—Naw." Eileen stopped. She was caught in a trap.

"You followed her and saw her take Tess into the priest's house?"

"Sure an' how—"

"Answer the question," said the judge again, sternly.

Eileen gazed helplessly at O'Hara, but he did not look at her.

"Did she take her by the church or by the front door?"

"By de church. No—How do I know who went in?"

"You have just admitted that it was Bridget Terry taking her daughter Tess."

"No, I ain't at all. I ain't never said who it was. Maybe it was someone else."

"Who was it?"

"I ain't said who I saw go to the priest's house."

"You saw a woman take a girl there, did you?"

"Yeh."

"Was the child crying?"

"Yeh."

"Did her mother beat her?"

"Yeh."

"You saw her mother beat her?"

At that moment O'Hara raised his eyes and gazed quietly in her face.

"I—I—I don't know whether I saw her or not."

"Once more, witness, I tell you that you must answer these questions or go to jail." The judge's tone was severe enough to frighten the boldest witness, and Eileen cowered back in her chair a very much startled woman.

"You saw Bridget Terry beat Tess before she took her over to the priest's house?"

Eileen would have told the truth then, but the priest's eyes were still upon her, and to her the terrors of the law were nothing to the terrors of the church. With dry lips she answered in a steady voice:—

"I didn't see Bridget Terry take Tess anywhere, on any day, ner I never see her beat her."

"Your honor," said Dilkes, "it is useless to examine this wit-

"I WOULDN'T BE WI'OUT THEE FOR TH'WORLD."



ness any further. She has already admitted having seen Mrs. Terry take her daughter to the priest's house, and now she denies it. She has been guilty of perjury in thus contradicting herself. I have Mrs. Terry's sworn statement to the fact, and I think you have heard enough to convince you that Mrs. Terry spoke the truth. I will therefore dismiss this witness, and offer the testimony of a child who saw Tess in the parochial school building."

He then called Maria Costello to the stand. Maria was a firm friend of the Protestants, and attended the Rossi Mission to the exclusion of Catholic services, as did also her parents, and she therefore felt no fear of the scowling black eyes which the priest bent upon her. She told a brief but straightforward story, and cross-examination failed to shake her testimony.

This was unexpected evidence to O'Hara, and for a time it looked as if matters might go hard with him. But he was not bereft of resources, as he soon proved. He had engaged shrewd lawyers to defend him, and they now attacked Bridget's testimony, calling the hospital physicians to prove her mentally unsound, and they succeeded well enough to create a strong impression in the priest's favor.

Eileen was called again to the stand, and her testimony was so manipulated as to make her a good witness for the defense. Finally O'Hara himself took the stand, and repeated his former denials with great appearance of sincerity, and with a master stroke of diplomacy he invited the court to search the parochial school buildings and his own house as well. He declared that every room should be thrown wide open to whoever should wish to search them. His lawyers undoubtedly defended him well, and in the end the judge again dismissed the matter, but promised Patrick warrants to search any Catholic institution in which he suspected the child was lodged.

From the search of the parochial school building no clue was found, of course. But when O'Hara heard that Patrick and a detective were making a tour of all the Catholic institutions for children in the city, he decided that Tess must be summarily disposed of, or he, even *he*, might find himself in serious trouble.

The newspapers discussed the matter vigorously. The Roman Catholic sheets cried "Persecution" lustily, and declared that their brother was a victim of a lunatic's vagaries. But the Protestants considered it a clear case of abduction, and speculated on the motive that lay behind it. Finally, the Protestant-Irish editor of a bright up-town daily summed up the discussion as follows: —

"After having reviewed the evidence thoroughly, and hearing all that our esteemed contemporaries have to say upon the subject,

we have come to the conclusion that the question practically narrows itself down to this: Was O'Hara the abductor, or was the abductor O'Hara? And in one of these two conclusions we believe you will find the true solution to the problem."

Whereupon all the anti-Falenites echoed with great unction "Amen."

. . . . . .

When Tess was taken to St. Joseph's Home she was a very sick child. Her confinement, the lack of food during part of her punishment, and the strain upon her nervous system which the constant fear and dread occasioned, all combined to undermine her health. The midnight ride, in her weak condition, proved a further detriment to her recovery, and for two weeks after her entry into St. Joseph's Home, she did not leave her bed in the infirmary. She was at last convalescent, however, and began to play a little about the ward with the other children. Here her persecutions had ceased, for as yet her failure to pray to the Virgin had not been discovered. She was recovering nicely when there came a hurried summons to the institution, and Tess was once more wakened from her sleep and prepared for a midnight journey.

"Has father come?" she asked wonderingly, as they helped her to dress.

"No," said the sister; but she looked at her curiously.

"Can't I go home now to de Mishner's?" she pleaded; but the sister forbade her to speak again, and would not—indeed, she could not—answer the question.

This ride was longer than the other, and over rough roads. It was almost morning when the carriage at last stopped. They drew up by a massive iron gate set in a stone wall, and after a vigorous pulling of the bell-rope a black-robed nun appeared at the panel. The sisters led Tess through the gate, and it closed heavily after them. In the semi darkness she could see tall trees and shrubbery as they passed up a wide walk. Then keys rattled again, a door opened, and they entered a dimly-lighted hall. The sisters exchanged some whispered words with the mother superior and then withdrew, leaving Tess behind the heavily-barred doors of the Convent of the Sacred Heart.

A weight of fear oppressed the desolate child. What would happen to her now! Would the priest follow her here? Would she have to go in the closet again? She stifled a choking sob, but trembled as a nun motioned her to follow her. The sombre figure

led the way through the dark corridor, and Tess' shoes sounded sharply against the stones as she hastened after it. They climbed a flight of stairs and passed through another corridor, and ascended more stairs. At last they entered an unoccupied cell, and here the nun removed the child's clothing and put her to bed.

Tess scrutinized the nun's face keenly. It was a very white face, and there were deep lines about the mouth. Truly her face seemed to tell more of grief and despair than of peace and holy joy. The child's sympathy was aroused, and she put up her little white hand and touched the sad face softly.

"Jesus loves you," she whispered.

The nun started back affrighted, and startled the child who looked at her with wide, troubled eyes.

"I only wants to love you," said Tess, trying to justify her soft caress.

The nun glanced about her swiftly, then, with a quick, hungry gesture, she suddenly stooped and kissed the childish mouth.

Tess smiled and said no more, but fell asleep comforted by the caress, but the nun shrank away as if she had been guilty of a crime. In the morning Tess was wakened by a beam of sunlight which streamed in through her window and fell across her face. She looked up wonderingly at the bare walls about her, for she had forgotten for the moment where she was. Then the memory of her ride came back again, and she sighed. Just then the nun unlocked the door and entered, bearing a tray upon which was coffee and bread. Tess thought that in the daylight she looked still more sad than she had looked at night, and the tender hearted child longed to comfort her. As the nun hastily fastened her clothing, Tess looked up into her face with a winsome smile in her deep blue eyes. The nun caught the smile and suddenly moaned aloud.

"I's so sorry for you," whispered Tess.

"You must not be sorry for me," said the nun. "Why do you speak so to me, child?"

"Because I t'ink you don't know about Jesus."

"What about Jesus?"

"I—I t'ink you don't know about Jesus loves you. He loves everybody, an' put all de sins away. Dat makes all peoples happy."

"How do you know that?" A note of pent-up anguish rang in her tone.

"De good Book—de Bible—say so. I can read it now, myself."

"The Bible! Where did you see a Bible?"

"Aunt Rossi's got lots o' dem. She give me one for my own."

"What was it like?" The nun spoke very softly now.

"Just like a book, only it had pretty pictures, an' Jesus wid de lamb, an' my name was in it."

"Do you remember anything that it said?"

"Yes, Aunt Rossi taught me. I can say 'For God so loved—' an' 'The blood—' an' 'The Lord is my shepherd—' that's about the lamb, you know."

"Hush! You must not speak so loud," said the nun.

"Shall I say some for you?" Tess whispered. "I likes 'The blood' ever so much. It's dis: 'The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin.' Ain't dat good?"

"What! Does it say anything like that? Say it again."

Tess repeated it, while her auditor gazed at her in amazement.

"But I likes de 'Wounded for our transgressions' de best of all." And very softly and slowly she repeated the fifty third chapter of Isaiah.

The nun sat and looked at her as if spellbound, while the hard lines in her face relaxed, and from her eyes dropped unnoticed tears at the gracious, comforting words.

"Where is that? Is that in the Bible?" she asked at last, when Tess had finished.

"Yes," said Tess, "I read it myself. De Bible's full of all de good t'ings."

At that moment a light footfall was heard in the hall, and Sister Veronica, for that was her name, started up and hastily left the cell.

Tess ate her breakfast, and then waited patiently, hoping that the nun would return, but she did not come again until she brought the frugal dinner at mid-day, and then Tess saw that she had been weeping. She did not speak to Tess, only placed the food upon the table, and then withdrew, locking the door behind her.

The long hours were very irksome to the child. She could not look out, for the window was too high above her head. There was nothing in the cell to play with, and as a last resort she fell to playing with the dishes in which her dinner had been brought to her. But at four o'clock Sister Veronica came again, and this time she took Tess out with her, and they went up to an unused tower which was full of windows, and walked back and forth in the sunshine. Tess longed to talk and tell the nun many things that interested her little mind, but the nun would not permit her to speak, and often glanced about fearfully, as if afraid of being seen. But once she had suddenly clasped Tess' hand in hers with a loving, tender grasp, and the child knew that the forlorn woman was her friend, even if she did not speak or look at her. When the walk was ended the nun took her back and locked her in the cell again.

Father Vosche was one of the favorite confessors of the Convent of the Sacred Heart, and was often consulted by the mother superior on matters concerning the institution. Probably no man, not even the bishop himself, knew more of the affairs of this particular nunnery than did he. When Tess had been but a few days in the convent, Father Vosche came, as was his wont, to hear the confessions of the nuns. While he was enjoying a social repast with the mother superior, that worthy dame imparted to him the news of Tessie's coming.

"What did you say her name was?"

"Tessie,—Tessie Terry."

"Terry! Is that the child that the newspapers say O'Hara abducted?"

The superior shrugged her shoulders.

"Ha, ha! So he has sent her here. You must let me have a look at her, my good mother. This is very interesting, and it might prove a bad joke on O'Hara if she ever gets out. What a bluff he made! Ha, ha, ha!"

The mother superior led the way to Tessie's cell. The child had rolled up her pillow for a doll, and was placidly dressing it with her own apron, which she had taken off for the purpose. Vosche laughed when he saw her.

"So this is the girl that O'Hara is having so much trouble over. Ha, ha! If she was older, now—"

He chucked the child under the chin, but Tess drew back, for there was a look in his eyes that frightened her.

"So ho! You are afraid of me. Why, I'm your father confessor, my child. Pretty soon you'll be running to meet me, like a little lamb. You'll love your holy father, and come to confess like all the good nuns do."

"God is my father," said Tess.

"Yes, God is your father, and I am your father, and the Holy Virgin is your mother."

Tess started, and a swift look of fear passed over her face. Was he going to ask her to pray to the Virgin as the other priest had done?

"Come, now, what are you afraid of? The Holy Virgin will take care of you."

Tess was silent.

"Do you say your prayers to her?" asked the priest.

"I prays every day," said Tess.

"That's right. How many Hail Marys have you said to day?"

The fear in the child's eyes increased. She glanced up at the

superior, but the woman stood with downcast eyes, as motionless as a statue. There was evidently no help from that quarter. The priest waited for his answer.

"None," slowly fell from the faltering lips.

"None!" exclaimed the priest, in surprise. "Why, me little dear, you mustn't forget the Holy Virgin. Now, I'll just leave you these beads, and while you are sitting here, you must say a Hail Mary for every one of them once a day, like the good sisters do. I'll see you the next time I come to confess the nuns, and then you must tell me how many times you have said it."

They left the cell and the door closed behind them. Tess drew a long, shuddering sigh as the beads slipped from her lap to the floor. Even the pillow doll failed to comfort her now, for a great dread weighed her down. Four days later the priest came again to her cell, but this time he was alone.

"Well, me little dear, have you said the prayers for me?" he asked.

"I said 'Our Father,' an' 'Now I lay me,' an' de creed."

"What's the 'Now I lay me'?"

Tess repeated the prayer learned at the missionary's knee: —

"Now I lay me down to sleep,
I pray the Lord my soul to keep;
If I should die before I wake,
I pray the Lord my soul to take."

"Who taught you that?" A frown was beginning to cloud his face.

"Aunt Rossi taught me."

"Rossi? Rossi? Is that the man who has the Mission down at Washington Corners, who is the president of the Pure Government Club?"

"Yes."

"When did she teach you? Is she your aunt?"

"Not my truly aunt. But when I was at her house, we allus called her that, me an' Ted. O, won't you let me go back to her? Please, won't you open de door?" and tears suddenly forced themselves from the child's eyes.

"When did you go away from her?" asked the priest, making no answer to her plea.

"Ever so long ago. My mamma took me away."

"How did Father O'Hara come to get you?"

"My mamma took me to him."

"So that story was true, after all. It will be a bad thing for O'Hara if this young un gets out," mused the priest.

"So you said the Lord's prayer and the creed. How many Hail Marys did you say?"

"I didn't say any," faltered the child, with paling cheeks.

"You didn't! Why didn't you?"

"Because—because—I can't."

"What! Don't you know the Hail Mary?"

"Yes, I knows it."

"Then why didn't you say it?"

"Because I can't pray to Mary any more," said Tess, desperately.

The priest's face grew dark.

"And why can't you pray to the Virgin Mary?" he asked, sternly.

"Because I am a Protestant now. I can only pray to God an' Jesus."

"It is the heretics who have taught you that," he answered, angrily. "Mary was the holy mother of God, and you must pray to her. I command you to pray to her."

Great tears rolled down the face of the helpless child.

"Here, take these beads and say the Hail Mary."

"I—I can't."

"You can, drat you! Say it, now, or I will punish you until you do."

"Oh, I can't say it," sobbed Tess. "Mary only de woman, not God. I can only pray to God."

"We don't have disobedience here, my girl." He spoke in a voice of suppressed passion. "We don't know what that is in a nunnery. To-morrow you shall walk on your knees with pebbles for a path. Then we will see what you will do."

He left the cell, and Tess heard the click of the key as it turned in the door. The next morning the mother superior came and strewed pebbles on the floor of the cell and forced the child to bare her knees and walk back and forth upon them. In vain the sobbing child begged release from her torture; not until the tender skin was broken and the blood poured from her wounds did the woman permit her to rise. Then Sister Veronica was sent to gather up the pebbles and Tess was left alone.

Until the beginning of her punishment Tess had been taken for a daily walk in the tower. In all that time, whether in the tower or going and coming in the halls, Tess never saw any person save Sister Veronica or the mother superior. Evidently her presence there was kept a secret even from the other nuns.

Sister Veronica had scarcely spoken to the child since the first day of her incarceration, nor had she permitted the child to speak to

her. Once Tess had caught her hand and kissed it, at which the nun burst into tears and hastily left the cell.

But this day, when the stones crushed so cruelly into the tender flesh, and little Tess lay sobbing with her pain, the sister came again at nightfall, and bending down, kissed the little face amidst passionate weeping.

"I am so sorry the stones hurt you," she said.

"Oh," moaned the suffering child," "it is so hard to be a Cat'olic.'

At the words, so difficult for a nun to hear, the woman started, and a sharp spasm of pain crossed her face. She looked as if some one had dealt her a heavy blow.

"It is so hard to be a Cat'olic." Again the words fell from the child's lips.

Stung to the quick, the nun buried her face in her hands, and in those moments of deepest communion with her own soul, she at last acknowledged the bitter truth to herself. Yes, it was hard—cruelly hard—to be a Catholic. And she tore off the mask which had so long hidden her real convictions, and owned the miserable reality. "Would God I were free from this bitter bondage," she cried from the depths of her inmost being, and tears of shame and humiliation poured from her eyes.

"Don't cry, sister," said Tess. "Jesus will come by-and-by. Aunt Rossi said so. Den He take us up to His beautiful home. I t'inks about it all de day."

The nun was kneeling beside the child's couch. Pressing her lips close to the child's ear, she whispered so faintly that Tess could scarcely hear it:—

"Does He love me, too? You said so, once."

"Yes," said Tess, as low as she could answer.

"Would—would He take me, too, if He came?" murmured the heart-broken woman.

"Yes. For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

A long shuddering sigh fell from the nun's lips as Tess finished, and she lay still with her face pressed close against the child's. Finally she rose up.

"Little girl, have you any friends?"

"Yes; Aunt Rossi an' Uncle Rossi, an' my fader. Oh, when will I see my fader again?" and Tess burst into sudden tears.

"Have you a father? Did he send you here?" asked the nun, in surprise.

"No, my mamma gave me to de priest. My fader don't know. Oh, if my fader know he would come for me."

Veronica could not understand it, but she had long ago learned that the ways of priests and prelates were inscrutable, and not to be questioned by common mortals.

"Does your father want you to be a nun?"

"No. My fader gone to de Protestant people. An' de Mish'ner take me an' Ted, an' den we be Protestants, too. An' my mamma mad wid me, for I be Protestant. An' she take me away from de school, an' she give me to de priest. An' den de priest mad wid me, too, because I not pray to de Virgin Mary any more. All de priests mad wid me, an' make me go on de pebbles."

Light, in a great flood, poured on Veronica's mind.

"Child, does your father know where you are?"

"No. Nobody don't know where I am."

"Do you think he would come and get you if he knew?"

"O sure! My papa love me. My papa so good to me. An' he's gone to get shet of de drink. An' I t'ink he's come back now, an' won't let anybody hurt me. Oh, won't you open de door, an' let me go to my fader?"

"Hush, child. Even the walls have ears here. Don't tell the mother that I spoke to you. Can I trust you, child, can I trust you? She whispered the question feverishly.

"Yes. I won't tell not'in."

"If you will not tell anyone that I have spoken to you or touched you, if you will promise me surely that you will never tell anyone, no matter what they do to you, I will try—oh, I will try—to send word to your father. I can't let you out. You are far away from the city. You would only wander in the forest if I did, and they would find you again. But I will do what I can, if your God will help me. Pray for me, child, pray for me every hour."

"I will," said Tess.

"Now tell me your father's name and where he lives."

"No," said Tess. "I will tell you my Uncle Rossi's place, for maybe my fader not dere."

"Would he come for you?"

"O yes. My Uncle Rossi can do anyt'ing."

Then Tess repeated to her several times the name and address of the missionary, until Veronica had it indelibly engraved upon her memory.

But it was many days before the watchful nun found a chance to dispatch her missive.

In the meantime the priest had come again to the child's cell,

but when he stood before her, his brow was dark and his eyes were evil. He put his hand on her familiarly.

"Are you ready to be me nice, obedient daughter now? Have you said the Hail Marys for me?" he asked.

Tess shrank from his touch as though a serpent had stung her, but the priest laughed coarsely.

"You're still afraid of me, me dear. Why, you'll soon be running to meet me, and want to kiss me, like all good children kiss their fathers. Now, tell me how many prayers you've said."

"I said de prayers every day."

"But the Hail Marys,—when did you say them

"I ain't never said dem."

The priest grew red with anger.

"You accursed little hussy! Do you defy me? By all the souls in purgatory, you shall pay well for it. You will go to the dungeon. That's the place for you, and when you come out you'll crawl on your hands and knees to me."

That night two nuns carried the child to the dungeon.

CHAPTER XIII.

O'Hara and Arroll were in a quandary. It was evident, in spite of their summary punishment of the bolting Falenites, that their party was losing ground. And losing ground at this juncture might prove disastrous on election day. To tell the truth, the Falenites were being hard pushed all over the city, and they looked to the solid Catholic vote in the foreigners' wards to offset their losses elsewhere, and turn the scale in their favor at the election. O'Hara therefore felt himself in duty bound to secure for his party every possible vote.

But O'Hara's own reputation, and consequenty his influence, was suffering somewhat because of the unfortunate "Terry imbroglio." The matter had become current gossip, even among the Italians, and more than one of them believed him to be guilty. He therefore felt the necessity of impressing the authority of the church upon the foreigners in some most salutary manner.

The anniversary of the Assumption of the Virgin was at hand, the day which the Romanist celebrates as commemorating the

averred translation to heaven of Mary, the woman from whose body the Holy Ghost wrought the earthly tabernacle of the Son of God.

Upon this day, in Roman Catholic countries, a great procession passes through the streets of the cities, and all loyal Catholics reverently salute the image of the Virgin as it is borne through their midst. The Italians of Arroll's parish were familiar with this sight in their native land, and although such demonstrations scarcely appeal to the more intelligent American Catholics, yet they have a strong influence upon the foreigner.

Arroll and O'Hara decided, therefore, that such a procession might have a wholesome effect upon their naturalized voters, and by recalling them sharply to a sense of their religious duty, render them more amenable to political instruction.

So the great procession was arranged. But as a means of stirring Catholic enthusiasm to its highest point, and clinching the matter, Arroll announced that all who were present at mass on the morning of the feast-day should see a great sight, one which they would never forget, for on that day the Virgin would make herself manifest to her faithful congregation and show her great power by working a miracle before their eyes. He promised that all who saw this miracle should receive special indulgences, and would be rewarded with particular favor by the Virgin.

When the day came the church was, of course, densely crowded with worshippers, and the space in front of the Virgin's altar was filled with kneeling devotees from early sunrise.

When mass began, a sense of intense expectancy pervaded the room, which increased as the long service progressed. But at last Arroll turned and addressed them in their native tongue.

He first reminded them of the virtues and mercies of the Virgin, and dwelt upon her glory as queen of heaven, and her mission as an intercessor between man and Christ. He then told them, in no measured terms, of the disobedience of which they, as Catholics, had been guilty that year in going in the way of heretics, and making friends of the enemies of their church. He pointed out to them that their sins had pierced the faithful heart of Mary, and she had now condescended to manifest her great sorrow to them. Then he bade them behold the Virgin, and pointed to the waxen image at his right.

"See," cried he: "behold her, for she is weeping tears of blood."

A shudder and moan of excitement passed over the assembly, and every eye was strained to view the image's face. While they waited, breathless, a tiny point of red glimmered on the eyelashes,

trembled there a moment, and rolled slowly down the face and splashed against a fold of her white veil. Then another and another of the blood drops flowed from the Virgin's eyes and rolled upon her veil, for O'Hara was behind the niche and squeezed hard on the sponge at the other side of accommodating tubes.

"She weeps for you," cried Arroll, and the people, affrightened, burst into sobs and loud groans. "This is because you have gone in the way of heretics, who shall be condemned to everlasting pain in hell. Your Holy Mother is merciful to you. She would save your souls, therefore she shows you her tears."

And O'Hara still squeezed on.

"Come up, now, and view your Mother's grief. Then go home and weep for yourselves. See the blood-drops flowing from her holy eyes. See the many tears she sheds for you. How can you be a stiff necked people any longer, when the queen of heaven condescends to weep for you?"

And O'Hara still squeezed on.

At length all had viewed the terrible spectacle, and many had left the church nearly frenzied with religious excitement and zeal.

Then Arroll went behind the scenes and put back the plug in the wall, while O'Hara washed his hands and pulled down his sleeves. Thus another victory was won for the good and holy church of Rome.

An hour later, when the news of the miracle had permeated the foreign colony, the imposing procession issued forth from the doors of the church. First came a company of girls dressed in white, bearing a silken banner. Then followed the priests in their flowing robes, carrying the sacraments. After them was a group of monks, with their cowls and girdles of rope. As they marched through the streets the people gathered in solid masses on either hand, and many were the tears and prayers offered by the devotees as the procession went its solemn way.

A Protestant stood in the crowd and laughed.

"Hush!" said his neighbor. "De good God is goin' past."

"Where is He? I don't see Him," said the man, mischievously.

"He's dere—in the sacraments dat de priest blessed," cried the horrified worshipper.

"Do you think that you can put the Almighty in a box and carry him around on a tray?"

The poor idolator gazed blankly at him for an instant, then crossed himself and moved away from the "heretic's" touch.

Some of the more impassioned of the people flung themselves

on their knees on the stones of the pavement, while they cried out their aves and prayers. One wondered how much more delusion it would require to reproduce the scene of the car of the juggernaut. Truly, but little more was needed. The whole crowd was profoundly moved. O'Hara's device was successful, and the naturalized voters, with the exception of perhaps about one hundred who had professed the Protestant faith in Rossi's Mission, were re won for the Falenites, and voted as a solid unit. The miracle (?) and the impressive procession which followed it won the day, and the priest's supremacy was restored.

The Pure Government Club felt keenly this last move of the priests. It had proved more powerful than all the campaign work which the Club had done during the entire season. It showed them in one view, how tremendous was the hold which the priesthood had upon a debased and degraded people, and how little a Protestant could hope to influence them until the chains of their superstition were broken.

At the regular meeting of the club the matter was discussed. Major William Livingstone said :—

"It seems to me that the question of this campaign is a very serious one; much more serious than we were aware at the beginning. I confess that I did not know the A B C of Roman Catholic power when I entered upon this attempt to win Ward B over to the Pure Government party. I thought I knew it. I thought I grasped some idea of its magnitude, but I realize now that I knew nothing. As day after day I have walked these streets in the lower part of this ward, and taken note of the subserviency of these people to their priest, their unquestioning obedience to his mandates, however unjust or injurious to themselves, I have asked myself, is there any power under heaven that can break this thraldom of their superstition? And I do not believe, gentlemen—I say it in all soberness,—I do not believe that these men will ever be fit for citizenship until it *is* broken. I believe that our government made a mistake in extending the franchise to them while they continue in this condition. It looks to me as if we had given them a knife with which to cut our throats.

"You may think me extreme, gentlemen, and perhaps in other cities, where the colonies of foreigners are smaller, the danger may be less apparent. But here, in Bay City, where they have congregated in such numbers as to overwhelm us at the polls, I believe that their enfranchisement has become a serious menace to us. To sum it up, it seems to me that the elevation of these people is a problem for the missionary, rather than for the politician."

"I think that Major Livingstone is altogether right in thinking that this is a problem for the missionary, instead of the politician," said Dr. Starr. I have watched the progress of this campaign with the keenest interest, and I am disappointed. After heroic efforts, both on our own part and on the part of our paid agents, we have gathered around us a goodly number of the naturalized voters, as well as of the native Catholic voters, and each time, through the direct efforts of the priests, they have been taken from us. First it was done by open persecution and intimidation, and afterwards by the supposed working of a miracle and a church procession. The only Italians who have remained true to us are those who were first converted in Rossi's Mission. I must say, if I may be allowed to express myself, that I feel a good deal of disgust with this effort to win over the Roman Catholics, and I am inclined to think that we had better turn missionaries and convert them first, before we try to teach them how to vote honestly."

This frank expression elicited some good-natured laughter, and then Howell Madison rose to speak.

"Our experience this summer has doubtless been a needful one. Indeed, I think that not only we ourselves needed it, but it has been needed by the nation. The story of our struggle in Bay City has gone far and wide, and our efforts and trials here in Ward B have formed no small part of that story. I believe that the nation has required this warning, this practical illustration of the dangers arising from unrestricted foreign immigration, and the too speedy enfranchisement of those immigrants. I think, too, that the character of our struggle has been calculated to impress upon the nation a realization of the formidable power wielded by the Roman Catholic hierarchy at the polls. Could we but convince the American people through our experience with the Catholic foreigners of this city, how utterly impossible it is for a man to be both a loyal Romanist and a loyal citizen, I should think that we had done well, even though we lost this election for which we have worked so hard.

"We all know, beyond a possibility of doubt, that the Romanist must yield obedience to his church and the commands of its priests, even in civil matters, before he obeys his government, and if the church commands him to do that which is contrary to the laws of our land, if he be an obedient Catholic, he must obey the church in defiance of the government. Are these the sort of men whom we wish to admit to the privileges of citizenship? Do we wish such men, trained to be traitors against us if it should be the will of pope or priest, to have an equal voice with ourselves in the administration of our government? How long will our government remain a free

and independent one under those conditions? Will not the Romanists of the land, who are subtly voting themselves into office to-day, —as they have already done in Bay City—ultimately take the reins of power into their hands at Washington? Are they not even now trying to do this? And when they have done so, who will govern us? Will it not be the Pope at Rome who governs them? Then where will be our blood-bought liberties?

"We believe in free speech, a free press, in the unsecularized public school, and in religious liberty. To all this, the world knows by centuries of bitter experience, the Roman Catholic church is irrevocably opposed!

"Gentlemen, it is not only to win a pure government for Bay City that we are fighting, but it is for the preservation of American liberties! It is to maintain the institution which our fathers established, and to uphold the government which they inaugurated, the price for whose existence they paid with the blood poured from their own veins. Let us not be downcast, but let us look up with increased zeal, realizing the greatness of the battle before us, and let us press on to a glorious conflict, for surely the righteous God above will yet make us to triumph."

"I was discouraged when I came here to-night," said Walter Villars. "But Dr. Madison has helped me to see that temporary defeat may mean victory in the end. And I believe that even if we lose this election, it will be a lesson to the country which will be of lasting good. We need to wake up the American people to see the dangers that threaten their liberties, and then I believe that they will rise up as one man and put an end to the evil of Romanism in politics."

"Gentlemen," said Rufus Wendell, "we have not lost this campaign yet, nor do I believe that we will lose it. We have not succeeded as we hoped in one quarter, it is true. Perhaps we hoped for too much, more than a cooler perception would have warranted. But we may have made more than corresponding gains elsewhere, and I fully believe that we have. We have no reason to be discouraged. But let us prepare for our parade and show even the foreigners of Ward B that we have strength left yet, and will hold our own to the end of the battle."

Thereupon the club turned to the discussion of business and perfected its plans for the great parade.

The long-expected rally occurred one fine night in August, ten days prior to the election. It had been widely advertised, and speakers of considerable reputation had been engaged to address the meeting. As soon as the advertisements were exposed to public

view, McGorge and his men hurried into consultation, and set on foot their own plans for a counter demonstration, and thereafter the general indications pointed to the fact that Ward B would be well diverted on that particular night.

The juvenile club was wildly elated, and it was almost impossible to restrain their exuberant spirits. Every boy was dressed and ready full two hours before any of the older paraders had gathered in the square. Micky was a study that night. He was irrepressibly demonstrative and supernaturally grave by turns. This may sound somewhat over-stated to the average reader, but to properly describe Micky it is always necessary to speak in superlatives. The boy was happy, ecstatically so, but it was also evident that something serious was the matter. George looked at him in a very matter-of-fact way, and quickly came to a conclusion as to the cause of the Irish member's attacks of extreme gravity. George always acted speedily in accordance with his conclusions.

"Say, Mr. Villars," said he, approaching that gentleman, "I guess Micky's hungry. Anyway, he looks empty. Now, he helped me with my papers this afternoon, so I could get through quick, and I 'cluded I'd give him three cents. But he looks so empty we'll make it five. Now, I've got a quarter that I earned, but I ain't got it here. It's at home, and my mother's gone out and the door's locked. If you'll lend me a nickel I'll give it to him, and then I'll bring it back to you to-morrow morning."

Villars looked at him with an amused smile.

"I always have interest on the money I lend. Are you willing to pay interest?"

"Well, yes, I guess so. Let's see, how much would that be? Now, the legal rate of interest in this State is six per cent., ain't it? Yes, I thought so. Well, now, Mr. Villars, that's six cents on a dollar for a year, ain't it?"

"That's about it," said Villars.

"Well, now, Mr. Villars, we'll just figure it out. I borrow five cents of you for one night. Of course, I'll pay you the regular rate of interest. So if you'll make the change for me, I'll pay it. That's it."

Villars laughed heartily.

"Good for you, George, said Wendell. "You won't be cheated right away, I'll warrant."

Villars called Micky to him.

"George here says you look empty."

Micky laid his hand expressively on his stomach.

"I thought I filled you up night before last. What's become of it?" asked Villars.

"SOMEBODY ELSE'S BLESSING"



"Guess de bung's out," said Micky.

A shout of laughter greeted this reply, and then Villars handed the boy a shining silver piece, with which he bounded out of the club rooms and made his way to a restaurant.

Just then a tall woman in black knocked timidly at the door. With the courtesy that marks the old-fashioned gentleman, Wendell stepped forward to ask her errand.

"My son is here, I believe," she said. "He wishes me to see the uniform you have given him. But perhaps I am intruding."

"Not at all, madam. We are glad to have visitors."

George Duane caught sight of her and sprang forward.

"This is my mother, Mr. Wendell. This is my own mother," and he took her hand affectionately. "She's come to see my new suit and the gun Mr. Villars give me. Ain't she a whoppin' good mother, Mr. Villars? I'm expressly glad I've got her."

The men smiled, but it was a grave sort of smile, as they greeted her with the utmost kindness.

"We are very glad to have you come, Mrs. Duane," said Wendell. "I think, too, that we shall have to congratulate you on your son. He is a very fine, bright boy."

The mother's face flushed a little, and the boy was evidently embarassed.

"He is a very good son," she said, gently. "I hope he will be as good a man."

"I am sure that he will be under your wise training."

"Don't be afraid for George, Mrs. Duane," said Villars. "He will turn out all right. Why, I expect to vote for him for the presidency yet, if I live long enough."

The mother laughed merrily. By that time George had recovered himself, and insisted upon showing her his gun, and they wandered off, looking at the various possessions of the club until the mother had seen all.

Wendell watched her as she went out. She was a tall, erect woman, with a dignified carriage,—a woman to instantly command respect, in spite of her simple dress. Her face was pale and thin, and lines of care were deeply graven in it. But it was also very sweet and attractive.

"I say, George," asked Wendell, "what does your mother do for her living?"

"She sews. My mother sews all day and most all night. I'm sorry to have my mother work so hard. She almost breaks her back. But she can't help it. She's got to work, and I ain't big enough to do it all yet. All I can do is carry my papers. I carry

papers on a route every morning and afternoon, and most every week I make two dollars, or sometimes two dollars and eleven cents, and we keep that for the rent. My mother and I get along the best we can, sir. But—but I am sometimes afraid,"—here he lowered his voice as if speaking in confidence—"I am really afraid she will break her back. And I don't want her to do that. I want to keep my mother, I do. And do you know, Mr. Wendell, what I want to do when I get to be a man? I want to take my mother back to grandfather's. I want to take her to the summer house, and out by the well, and down by the spring in the woods. Why, she knows just where the wild honeysuckles grow, and where the bees hid their honey that time. Do you know about it? And my grandfather's got the gun that his father carried in the Revolution. Do you know, Mr. Wendell, my great-grandfather died in the Revolution? I'm expressly glad about that, I am. Why, I'm just an American all over. I'm not one of the paper kind of Americans at all. I'm one of the *born* kind. I'm just glad to death about that. But"—and his face clouded again—"I don't want my mother to break her back."

"What makes you think she will break her back, my boy?" asked Wendell, kindly.

"Why, because it aches so. It just can't help but ache, she sews so much."

"Can't she get anything else to do?"

"No. She's tried and tried, and she can't. Don't you think I'm growing bigger, Mr. Wendell? I think I'm a great deal bigger than when you first saw me. It does take such a norful long time for boys to grow. It seems to me I'm just stashunry," said George, desperately.

"You will be large enough to help her by-and-by." And then Wendell fell to thinking and questioning if there was not something better than sewing which Mrs. Duane might do, while waiting for her son to grow to manhood.

Meanwhile, the paraders had begun to assemble in force, not only at Washington Corners, under the banner of the Pure Government Club, but also at the Falenite headquarters in McGorge's saloon. At eight o'clock both factions were ready to start, and the marching orders were about to be given to the Pure Government forces when a messenger came with a note from a Catholic physician, saying that they would be obliged to change their route on account of sickness in Briscoe street. This was extremely annoying, coming as it did at the last moment, but Rossi patiently held back his men until the change could be made in the route, and the fact be communicated along the line.

Then they started. The fife and drum corps from an up-town club led the way, while Rossi and the chief men of the Pure Government Club followed. The second contingent was led by a brass band. The third division marched after the drums of the Washington Club, gayly dressed in their new uniforms.

Every man carried a flaming torch, and stepped firmly to the strains of the martial music. Altogether it was an imposing sight, and the leader of the club felt that they had no need to be ashamed of their showing. Indeed, a number of men joined their ranks and carried torches that night, whom they had looked upon as staunch Falenites, and the fact gave them no little encouragement.

They had covered nearly half their distance, when McGorge's men, also led by a brass band, with McGorge, O'Herlihan, Riley, O'Donnell, and O'Hara at the head of it, issued out through a cross street and attempted to cut through the Pure Government lines. At first the encounter of forces threatened to be disastrous, but Howell Madison, happening to be just ahead, stepped back hurriedly and parted his lines, allowing the Falenites to go through. Fortunately the latter's column was comparatively short, and by double-quick marching Madison finally overtook his own procession again.

Coming back through Fernwood avenue, the Falenites met them face to face and attempted to dispute passage with them, but since the Pure Government men were well into the block before their rivals reached it, they were forced to give way and swerve against the sidewalk, which they ultimately did with a very bad grace.

Thousands of people lined the pavements, or looked down from the windows and roofs of the tenements. Some of the on-lookers jeered and some cursed as they recognized the Protestants, and a few stones were slung. But for the most part the foreigners were tolerably well behaved.

One incident, however, marred the pleasure of the evening, and almost checked the enthusiasm. As the third division wheeled into Cabot Lane—a dark, narrow street, familiarly called Pope's Lane, because of the low Catholics that filled it—there was a stir in the crowd on the pavement.

Bravely the juvenile club were marching in their gay uniforms, loudly they beat their drums, when, with a cruel hiss, a stone from the gutter cleaved the air and struck in their midst. There was a cry of fear and alarm, and the oncomers almost stumbled over the body of a boy. Then they parted, and Villars lifted in his arms—Juan Miro.

He carried him to a drug-store, and bathed the ugly wound, but the boy lay back unconscious. Dr. Starr left the ranks, and hurried

to them, and then the procession moved on. A few moments later they had reached the Corners, and here they gathered around the speaker's stand, and prepared to listen to the addresses. The band had just finished playing a national air, when the rival paraders, who had halted a block distant, began a display of fireworks, in the hope of attracting the people from the square.

But Rossi was familiar with Falenite tricks, and was prepared for even this emergency. He therefore ordered the band to play again, while he hastily brought a store of fireworks from the club-rooms, and a few moments later the Falenites themselves were amazed at the greater display of their neighbors. When at last the Falenite supply gave out, their crowd rushed over to the square to view the end of Rossi's display, after which some of them even remained to hear the addresses.

The visiting speakers were first introduced to the audience, and were accorded a sympathetic and respectful hearing. But McGorge had been careful to send to his enemies' camp several faithful spies, who caused continual interruptions. It was their chief business to involve the listeners in discussions, which should become heated, whereupon the "spy" was instructed to invite his victims to "come outside and settle it." If anyone fell into the trap, by the time he had reached the outer edge of the crowd his tempter was nowhere to be found. Another of the Falenite wiles was to send a truck through the crowd as often as they dared, breaking up the listening groups, and drowning the speaker's voice with the noise of the horse's hoofs. When the truckman had made an almost intolerable nuisance of himself, a policeman was ordered to arrest him, but came back with a look of fear on his face. The truckman was Murphy O'Donnell's brother, and what man in his senses would dare to arrest Murphy O'Donnell's brother? But these incidents, annoying though they were, failed to materially detract the crowd's attention.

At the close of one of the addresses Dr. Starr mounted the platform and came forward. He looked so grave that a silence fell upon the assembly.

"I have painful news to communicate to you," he said. "The boy—Juan Miro—is dead. Worst of all, he died by his father's hand."

The doctor seemed to be much moved, and gave way to Villars, who said:—

"This is a most shocking thing. I know you will all feel it as we do. The boy was marching with our juvenile club, and his father saw him. He was angry because the boy was found with Protest-

ants, and he threw the stone that killed him. The boy was too young to have been conscious of any disobedience in participating in our patriotic work. I am glad to bear testimony to the fact that he was uniformly obedient. But he loved this country. That was his fault. I do not believe that any American boy was more profoundly moved at a recital of the stirring events of American history than was he, and any appeal to patriotic emotions brought the tear of sympathy at once to his eyes. I verily believe that this lad has as truly died for love of his country as any hero of the Revolution."

Murmurs of regret and chagrin were heard on every side, and the programme was interrupted long enough for the band to play a solemn minor, and then the last speaker was announced. It was Patrick Terry.

"Fellow citizens," he said, speaking with strong emotion, "you have just seen an exhibition of the hatred that is born of religious bigotry, venting itself upon the head of a defenceless child. Gentlemen, there is another child who has fallen a victim to this hatred,—my daughter.

While you are pleading for an honest government, I am pleading for my child. You are asking the law to free you from the machinations of a corrupt hierarchy. I am asking that the terrible power of that hierarchy shall be broken, and that the prisons which they have built, to which they doom men and women to imprisonment for life, shall be thrown open to the light of day.

"Gentlemen, forgive me. I know for what purpose you are gathered here. I have not forgotten it. I know that this is not the place to ask redress for a personal wrong. But mine is a wrong which only the strong arm of the law can right. And I ask you to see that it is righted, not only for my sake, and the sake of my child, but for the safety of your own children and the preservation of your own homes, lest they stretch forth their hands and rob you as they have robbed me.

"I do not wish to rouse any man to persecute a religious sect, nor to oppose an individual because of his belief, but when any church, whatever may be its faith, usurps political powers, nullifies the freedom of the ballot, shakes its fist in the teeth of our Constitution, and to accomplish its end becomes the cunning accomplice of corrupt demagogues,—above all, when it dares to desecrate the sanctity of the family, and reach in and pluck out a child from the home, and hide that child from the eye and touch of its parents,—I say, and I say it before the Almighty God, that power should be broken! Let the lightning stroke of a nation's wrath smite it to the ground! I do not cry, 'Down with Romanism!' No! let every

man be accountable to his own conscience for his religion. But I do say,—and God grant that the words may echo from end to end of this great land,—give us the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness! Give us the right to our homes and our families. O God give us the right to our children,—the little ones we nurture on our breasts, and lay against our cheeks,—whose life is the life of our life, whose blood was drawn from our own veins! O brethren, it is for my child I am pleading! I beseech you, give her to me again!"

He flung out his empty arms to the breathless multitude, while the paroxysm of agony spent itself in the flood of tears that rained over his cheeks. Strong men cried and groaned aloud, as each thought of his own home, and those dearer than life itself who were gathered about its hearth, and with saddened, silent faces, they turned away in the darkness of the night.

CHAPTER XIV.

The night of the Pure Govenment parade in Ward B was a memorable one. The killing of Juan Miro, and Patrick Terry's passionate pleading for his imprisoned child, had awakened the multitude to the soberness of the task they had in hand. All through the city the influence of that night was felt, and the better element of the people saw that they were fighting for something more than a clean administration for the municipality. There was a great principle hidden in the womb of the struggle. It was a question of purity and candor and honesty against might and cunning and violence. The campaign assumed to their opened eyes the form of an issue pregnant with results,—results which might prove to be as far-reaching as time itself. And as they saw this, they were sober, and many called to the God of Heaven to give them the victory in their solemn struggle.

But to another one save Juan Miro came that night a draught from the cup filled by bigotry's offspring, hatred, for the boy Pietro also suffered.

He had scarcely reached home when his father met him. The man's eyes were fierce with anger. Catching the boy by the shoulder, he hurled him to the floor, and beat and kicked him with pitiless

vehemence. Then he dragged him to the door, and ordered him to begone.

"Wot have I done?" cried poor Pietro.

"Ye go wid de Protestants. Ye nevva coma de house again." And the man drove him out.

Pietro wandered through the lonely streets, hiding his grief in the darkness of the night. Homeless and alone, he seemed to be swallowed up in the bitterness of his sorrow. Just as the morning dawned he stopped by a familiar hedge. It was Hollis' garden. He remembered the place, for he had often passed it that summer. Here, then, was a friend. This man, at least, would not turn him away. He went in, and sat down on the soft sward by an old oak tree. His grief still oppressed him, and presently he flung himself, face downward, on the grass, and hid his wet eyes from even the prying insects of the night. And then sleep overtook him, and he forgot his troubles in its rest, nor did he waken until by-and-by the coachman found him, while the broad sun streamed upon his back.

"Well, my lad, what are you doing here?"

Pietro sat up and looked around, forgetting for the moment the trouble that drove him there. Then it all came back again, and he answered:—

"My fader turned me out las' night. I was in de parade wid de Protestants, an' he's mad wid me, an' he beat me, an' turn me out."

"Is that it? Do you know Mr. Hollis?"

"O yeh! I knows him. I knows dis is his place, an' I come in. But I'll go now."

"Stay where you are till I tell the master about you, and see what he'll say."

The coachman strode away to the house and made known his errand. Hollis had just risen, and he went down at once to the garden.

"Well, Pietro, this is a sad ending of patriotic work for you. I am sorry to hear of it."

"Yeh," said Pietro, brushing off a tear.

"What will you do for a living, if your father will not take you back again?"

"Maybe I kin sell de papers."

"Where will you live?"

"I dunno."

"Have you money to buy your papers?"

"Naw. But sometimes I runs de errands, an' holds de hosses, an' I kin clean de house, too. Maybe I kin get de mon fer de papers."

Hollis looked at him keenly.

"You go over there to the kitchen, and I will tell the cook to give you a breakfast. Then the coachman will find enough work for you to do to pay for your food, and perhaps enough for you to earn your papers. Now let me see how well you can work."

Pietro joined the ranks of the newsboys that afternoon with a silver quarter of a dollar in his hand. Paulo gave him some sound advice and helped him to get his papers. It was new business to him, but at nine o'clock that night, Hollis, sitting on his pleasant veranda, saw a tired boy toiling slowly up the walk, and Pietro said: —

"I selled 'em, Mr. Hollis. But I been clear up to de river."

"You had hard luck, didn't you?" said Hollis. "Have you a place to sleep?"

"Naw. Maybe ye'll let me sleep under de big tree again. I won't do no harm."

"That is not a very good place to sleep. I think the coachman has a place for you. Go down and ask him."

Pietro found a lunch of apples and sandwiches awaiting him, and afterwards a comfortable bed was given him in the coachman's quarters. In this way he spent many days, until he proved his trustworthiness, and then Hollis gave him work in his own establishment, and sent him to evening school. Pietro often visited his home when his father was absent, and did much to comfort and help his mother, but his father refused to be reconciled to him.

Micky Healy was filled with concern at the fate of Juan and Pietro, and it became an embarrassing question in his mind as to what might be his case, if his father, a Catholic and supposed loyal Falenite, should know that his own son was a member of the juvenile adjunct to the Pure Government Club.

Now Micky saw very little of his father, and at this time he had not met him for a number of days. He therefore looked forward to an accidental encounter with no little dread. Nevertheless, as the day wore on, and his forebodings increased, it seemed better to settle the matter once for all, whatever might be the outcome.

As for the results, while it was awkward to have a fellow's father down on him, and also while parental chastisement invariably hurt, Micky reflected that his actual condition could scarcely be worse than it was already. He slept in wagons, trucks, on lumber piles, or in convenient hallways, and, generally speaking, his father did the same. As for eating, why, that was a most uncertain matter at all times. Of course, in accosting his father, he ran the risk of a beating, but the pangs of anxiety and a burdened conscience were some-

times harder to bear than the stings of too forcible applications to the breeches.

So Micky decided to reconnoitre the situation. He had not gone far when, at one of the tables under an awning which McGorge had labeled "Summer Garden," he saw his father sitting. A plate of cheese and crackers, and a glass of foaming beer, were before him. Micky looked at him with concern. The crackers and cheese appealed very strongly to him, but he was never allowed to share in these delicate repasts, and he therefore confined himself to the business in hand.

"Dad! Hey dere!"

His father looked out over his glass of beer, but said nothing.

"Hey!" said Micky.

His father grinned in recognition.

"Say, did ye see me las' night?"

His father stared a negative, but vouchsafed no other reply.

"Did ye—did ye—knowed w'ere I was?"

The man still stared, his countenance as immovable as a sphinx.

"Did ye know dat I jined de club, de big club over dere, wot peraded las' night?"

A slow grin gradually pervaded the elder Healy's features.

"Did ye—did ye—care if I did?"

The grin broadened. Micky began to be relieved.

"Ye ain't goin' to kick me,—ner—ner not'in'?"

The grin was broader yet, and then Healy, senior, reached for a cracker, which he tossed to his offspring, and went on placidly sipping his beer.

Micky caught the cracker, and jamming it between his teeth, walked half a block on his hands, with his wriggling heels in imminent proximity to the stomachs of passers-by. His feelings thus relieved, he finally righted himself, and sat down on the curbstone to masticate his cracker.

The general concensus of opinion on this episode is that Healy, senior, had become an anti-Falenite.

CHAPTER XV.

Sister Veronica had waited and watched many days for an opportunity to send her letter, but it seemed as if it would never come. While she waited her cheeks grew whiter than ever, and the lines of

suffering deepened in her face. For now she carried not only the burden of her own sorrows, but those of the child as well. No one but herself ever visited the little prisoner, and she was only permitted to go at morning and night to take bread and water.

Sometimes, too, she was punished because she had lingered a moment in the lonely, noisome dungeon. Her anxiety seemed almost intolerable at the last, and the years of cruel discipline in self control which she had endured were almost unavailing now, and she dreaded lest the agitation which she could not wholly conceal should be noticed by her associates, and arouse suspicion. To divert it, therefore, she performed especial vows and gave herself to prayers and self-chastisements. But beneath the self afflictions her whole being seemed to be crying out to Tessie's God, the Protestant's Saviour, to restore the child to those who loved her.

She had written a letter in secret, and it lay concealed in the folds of her robe. For days she carried it so, and then one morning the Almighty gave her the opportunity which she sought.

The mother superior was slightly ill, and Veronica was sent to attend her. While she was thus engaged the bell rang in the gate and the superior gave the keys to Veronica, and bade her answer the call. With a beating heart she went to perform the errand. Another sister accompanied her to the door, and stood watching as she opened the panel. The caller was a postman with a package of registered mail. The package proved to be a bulky one, and Veronica was obliged to open the gate itself. As she took the package from his hands she dropped her precious letter into his bag unnoticed by the nun in the doorway, and returned to her superior with a heavy load gone from her heart. How happy the day seemed to her then! Surely the child's friends would come for her! Surely the little life would yet be spared, and peace be at last vouchsafed to the suffering one.

In the dungeon below little Tess lay prone upon the floor. The dark, dank place was foul with neglect and long misuse. Its only openings were holes cut in the side walls, a part of the building's foundation formed the outer walls. The partitions were of wood on one side, and brick on the other. No light could penetrate here, because it was below the level of the ground, and the only air that it received was that common to all the cellar.

Prone lay the defenseless child. To the slimy stones her loose damp curls were clinging. One slender, puny hand was stretched out upon the floor. The other crossed her breast. Out into the darkness stared her soft, blue eyes, peopling it with those she loved. The little face, so wan and white and waxen, was yet sweet with its pathetic, submissive sorrow. She no longer mourned, or sighed, or wept.

Sometimes men sorrow till grief has reached its end. There are no sighs left to breathe. The fount of tears is dry. In silence—aye, in peace, the soul awaits departure, and looks upward to its God. Thus the child lay waiting. For her the gamut of sorrows had been run. The bitterness of death had passed, and only the final shattering of the earthly tenement stood between her and the perfect comforting of her God.

Once in the dungeon the priest had visited her, but of the awful horror of that visit even the child dared not think.

And so she lay, and the still hours passed wearily on. She lay, and waited, and looked upward, and smiled as though the touch of an angel's wing had brushed her cheek. And the darkness was thick around her, and the air was dank and foul. And she was suffering. Torturing pains came and went in that racked body, yet she lay, and suffered on, and waited, and smiled, and looked upward, for she knew it was light with God.

Then the nun came again. She carried a candle in her hand, and its feeble rays searched out the child with feverish haste.

"Child, dear child, are you still alive?" she whispered.

"Yes, sister, I am here."

"Dear little one, you are so lonely here in the darkness."

"O no, not now. De angels comes and stands beside me, an' dey makes it light."

"Do the angels come, child?"

"Yes. I t'ink dey'll soon take me home, an' I won't lie on de stones no more"

"O Tessie, don't go yet! Listen,—to-day I sent the letter. Perhaps your friends will come for you."

Tess smiled a little,—a sad, unexpectant smile.

"Are you not glad, dear Tess?"

"Yes, I am glad. I t'ink maybe dey will take you away, but I t'ink Jesuss will take me."

"O Tess, if they take you perhaps they can save your life. My heart will break if you die."

"Aunt Rossi will love you," she answered.

A moment later Tess tried to lift herself to receive the water, but a groan of intense pain broke from her lips, and she fell back on the stones again.

"Let me lift you. Do not try to move yourself. O my child, I would have given my life to save you from this," said the nun.

She lifted the little head and put the water and bread to her lips. When the child had eaten all that her sick body could endure, she lay down again, but she was very pale. It looked like the pallor of death to the weeping sister bending above her.

"O my darling, don't go with the angels yet. Wait a little," she begged.

But the pale lips could not answer her.

"Stay a little longer. Surely they will come for you, and the doctors may save your life."

But Tess shook her weary head.

"Jesus come for me soon," she said.

With anguished heart the nun took up her candle and bent down to say farewell, for she had stayed too long already. The child kissed her and pressed a thin hand against her face, and whispered once more: —

"W'en dey takes you, don't make de children Cat'olics any more. It's so hard to be a Cat'olic."

Patrick had searched many institutions, scanning the faces of children in schools and play-rooms, on sick beds, and in convalescents' wards. But he had found no clew to his daughter's hiding place. He was sick at heart and weary with discouragement. Rich men had used their influence in his behalf, and the officers of the law had helped him. But still there was no sign of the missing child. It seemed as if the earth might have opened and swallowed her up.

And then one morning at breakfast, Rossi picked up a letter from his mail addressed in a strange hand. It was a soiled letter, and worn as though it had been carried long. He opened it curiously, and uttered a startled cry.

"Tess!" he exclaimed. "She is in a convent!"

Patrick sprang from his chair.

"God help you, Patrick, she is dying."

The father took the letter with shaking hands, and read as follows: —

SIR,—Theresa Terry is here, in the Convent of the Sacred Heart. Come quickly and get her, for she is dying. Oh, if there is any mercy in your hearts, take me, also.

SISTER VERONICA.

One thing only must be done before they could go to the child. A special order must be procured from a judge permitting them to search the convent. This was obtained, and Patrick set forth, accompanied by his friends, Rossi and Howell Madison. Stalwart officers of the law went with them.

They were obliged to go in carriages, for the place was remote from railways. The journey was a long one, and noonday had passed before it was accomplished.

Finally the two vehicles stopped before the great iron gate and an officer rang the bell.

The mother superior presently appeared at the panel. She was greatly astonished at her visitors. The officer read aloud his warrant to search the premises, and the woman's face grew pale with fear.

"We have no child here. This is a convent, a place for women who have taken vows," she answered, haughtily.

"We shall soon know for a certainty whether the child is here or not," replied the officer. "I must ask you to open the gate."

"I cannot disobey my orders," said the woman, and turned to flee.

Instantly heavy blows rang against the gate, and the iron frame began to totter. The superior hesitated, returned, and finally opened it, then fled once more toward the house. Here she again turned to oppose them, but a man sprang past her and grasped the door, while the chief official laid his hand on her arm.

"Madam, I warn you that if you resist I will put you under arrest. Give us the keys and we will search this place without hurting you or any one in the house, and we will do no harm to your building. But if you refuse to give us the keys, we will break down every door that is locked against us."

"By what right do you come here? This house is under the protection of the bishop. If he knew of this he would punish you well," she said, angrily.

"And if he did he would find himself in prison. We represent the civil power, madam, which is a great deal stronger than any your bishop wields. Will you give us those keys? I give you ten seconds in which to decide."

"I have no right to do so. I am bidden to protect this place. I am under orders."

"Officers, do your duty. Every door that is locked must be broken open."

"I—I will give you the keys," said the woman, faintly.

"Officer Shields will remain here with this woman until we return. You must not permit her to stir from this spot," said the chief.

The superior glared in fury at her captor, but he was relentless. Patrick and his helpers hurried on. From room to room they went, while the terrified nuns fled in every direction at their approach. Only one was not afraid, and she stood waiting, hope and expectancy in every line of her face.

"Do you seek Theresa Terry?" she asked.

"Yes. Are you the nun Veronica?"

"I am. Come this way. I will show you where she is."

Swiftly she led the way through the long corridors, and down flights of stairs. In the cellar she paused and lit a candle, then hurried forward through damp, circuitous passages. The way seemed interminable, but, at last, far in the rear of the building, she stopped and applied a key. A heavy door creaked on rusty hinges, and the strong men shuddered as they gazed into the inky blackness of the dungeon. Veronica stepped in before them.

"Tessie, Tessie, your friends have come! They have come!" and she knelt on the foul stones beside a tiny figure dimly outlined in the faint rays of the candle.

"Great God!" cried Patrick, staggering forward. Rossi steadied him.

"Careful, sir, do not touch her! She is very ill. There, let me lift her. Hold your arms!"

The nun slowly raised the emaciated body, and laid the dying child in her father's arms. One of the men held the candle above their heads, and father and daughter gazed in each other's faces at last.

A great cry—a bitter, gasping cry—broke from the father's throat, and sobs choked those who stood by.

"O my daughter!—my daughter!"

But the shock of sudden joy was too great for the child. She could not speak nor move, and blessed unconsciousness came to relieve her.

Gently the men led the father forth, almost bearing him up, while again and again his bitter groans sounded through the dark passages.

Howell Madison turned to the nun.

"Sister Veronica," he said, "as God is my witness, you shall want neither home nor friends while I live. Come!"

He drew her hand through his arm. An officer stepped behind her in protection, and thus they left the building.

As they passed the mother superior, she sprang at Veronica with the fury of a lioness, but strong hands forced her back, and she did the nun no harm. Then they made her provide wine and food for the fainting child, and to give them a robe to cover her, which was to the superior the very gall of bitterness. And then they bore the child to the carriage, and she lay against her father's breast all the long journey home.

The sun was sinking in the west when at last they reached the city. At Washington Corners they turned aside to the Mission, for every motion of the vehicle was agony to the child, and she could

endure no more. Carefully they bore her up the stairs into a room in the organ loft, where a faint breeze came through the open window, for the night was hot and still. Lillian was there, and with the nun's help they made a bed of pillows, and laid the child upon it. With streaming eyes Lillian bent to kiss the little, weary face.

Then Margaret came, and Dr. Starr, and the women were shut in with him for a time.

The men in the club-rooms had seen the carriages, and hurried across the square.

"She is found! The child is found!" they shouted, but the joy died on their lips when they saw her, and a murmur of amazement was heard.

"What is the matter? What has been done to her?" they asked.

Madison answered them.

"She was in the Convent of the Sacred Heart. I cannot tell you more at present. She is very ill, but we do not know what has happened to her."

The men withdrew, unsatisfied, and conversing among themselves.

Patrick sat at one side of the gallery with bowed head. The moments dragged wearily by, while he waited to know his child's condition. At last the doctor came out and motioned Patrick and Rossi to him. Laying his hand on the father's shoulder, he said with deep sympathy: —

"Can you nerve yourself to bear a very hard trial? There is no hope for your daughter. She cannot recover. She is dying—violated."

Patrick flung out his arms and staggered forward. Rossi caught him, and they placed him in a chair. A horrible mist seemed to cling before his eyes, and a sense of utter desolation stole over him. His friends stood beside him, mute with sympathy. Then Madison knelt down, and besought help of the only One able to help in this bitter hour.

Sometimes men live years in a moment of time. It was so now with Patrick. When he raised his head he looked like an old man.

He tottered in to the child's bedside and sat down, taking her puny hand in his palm. The physician had administered a quieting draught, so that her pain was deadened, but it was evident that her strength was going fast.

The child looked at her friends with a quiet peace shining in her steadfast eyes. But she was too near the eternal joys to be overmuch moved by any happenings of earth. She lay still, her little face wan and white, and yet as sweet as if it had already caught the glow of its heavenly beauty, and those who watched her felt their very souls cry out in grief.

Ted was brought, and coming to his sister's side, he burst into passionate crying. He pressed his wet cheek against hers, and pleaded with her not to die. Poor boy, his disappointment was great indeed!

"O Tessie, don't die like mamma did. Please stay here and come to Aunt Rossi's again. I want you so much, dear Tess!"

The child's lips moved and her father bent down to hear.

"Tell Teddie that the angels are coming, and I am going home with them to live in Jesus' house."

"But I want you to stay here," sobbed the boy, and would not be comforted.

Madison brought Dennis, and the older boy looked at his sister in amazement.

"Wot's de matter?" he asked, awkwardly.

"Your sister is dying, Dennis," said his father.

Tess fastened her eyes on her elder brother's face. He came near her and she tried to speak. Bending down he caught the words:—

"Jesus is coming for me. O Dennis, believe de Protestants' religion. It's so hard to be a Cat'olic."

He looked at her intently, but she could say no more, only her eyes followed him as long as he remained in the room. It seemed as if she were pleading with him. Finally, when he could bear it no longer, he kissed her, and bade her good-by and went out.

Then, for the only time, the tears crept down from under the child's lashes and fell over her cheeks. Soon after she fell asleep, and the watchers moved softly about the room. Ted was taken home, and the doctor also left them for a time.

But one viewed the child's return that evening to whom the event was of terrible importance. O'Hara was sitting in the church study when the men of the Pure Government Club sent up their joyful shout. Curious to see what had caused his neighbors' rejoicing, he walked lazily over to the window, and peered out between the half-closed blinds.

He saw carriages, and excited men, and two bearing a child up the steps of the Mission. He recognized Patrick and Rossi, and he thought he recognized the child. Then there followed a woman in a black robe and veil, with white bands about her face. And as he looked a deadly fear smote him,—yes, even smote him, O'Hara.

Was the girl found? he questioned of himself. Had some one betrayed him? And the woman in black, was she a nun? He gasped with fear at thought of what this might mean if it were true.

He hurried into the church below. Francesca Nolta was there,



"STAY THERE"

T. Pym.

waiting to make her confession. O'Hara motioned her to him and she followed him to his study.

"Go and find out what child was carried into that Mission just now," whispered the priest, hoarsely. "See if that was a nun with her. Don't tell any one on your life who sent you. Come back the instant you find out."

Francesca was gone in a flash. She loitered in hallways and watched every one who passed in or out of the Mission door, but only men to whom she dared not reveal herself came and went. She crossed over to the club-rooms and listened near one of the windows, but although the men made angry gestures, they spoke in hushed tones.

O'Hara paced back and forth, alternately trembling and trying to reassure himself. He could not believe that the child's hiding-place had been discovered. And yet, if that were a nun,—

He peered fearfully through the blinds. Francesca still loitered near the Mission door. Later Dennis came out and went slowly down the street. Francesca followed. Dennis turned into Pope's Lane and Francesca walked up beside him.

"Who sick in de Mission?" she asked, with well-assumed unconcern.

"Tess, my sister," said Dennis, scarcely glancing at her.

"Who brought her?"

"My fader brought her."

"Who's wid her?"

"I dunno. O yeh! De nun."

"Did a nun come wid her?"

"Yeh."

"How did de nun get out?"

"I dunno."

The conversation was not to Dennis' taste, and he left his interlocutor. Francesca turned back to retrace her steps. Just then three men, whom she had seen in the club-rooms, came toward her. She slipped behind them in the shadow and followed noiselessly, drinking in every word. The men were Costello, Colombo, and one of the policemen who had accompanied the rescuers to the convent.

"How you fin' out de girl in de convent?" asked Colombo

"That nun, Sister Veronica, wrote to Rossi, and told him where the child was. So they got a warrant to search the place, and we went up there."

"W'ere dey fin' de girl?"

"She was down in the cellar, in the blackest hole I ever saw in my life. She was lying on the stones, and the door was locked. It

was away under ground, off in an out-of-the-way corner, and you went in and out of so many winding halls I wondered how that woman could ever remember the way. I don't believe we would ever have found her if that nun hadn't shown us the place. We brought the nun out with us. I guess that mother superior would have killed her quick enough if we hadn't. She wanted to come bad enough, too. She asked Rossi in the letter to take her out."

Francesca stole back to the priest. She told him everything, and when she had finished O'Hara's face was livid with fear. But he shook his fist at the Mission with murderous hatred.

"Kill 'em! Kill 'em! Vile, accursed beasts!" he cried between his set teeth, while he almost foamed with rage. "Kill 'em, and send their souls to hell!"

One refuge only was left him,—flight. He well knew that when the morning dawned he must be beyond the State lines if he would save himself from a felon's cell. But he was mad with baffled rage, and an insatiable thirst for revenge.

"Woman, do you see that?" He fairly hissed the words into Francesca's ears, while he held a gold piece before her eyes. "The church rewards those who destroy her enemies. Burn them,—burn down the heretics to the ground! Lock 'em in, and set fire to their devilish place! Mary loves those who serve her. She'll reward ye. Go!"

He pressed the gold into her hand, while his eyes glared with fury.

Francesca's face had in it all the cunning of an evil spirit. She had more money in her grasp at that moment than she had ever seen in her life before. What would she not do to revenge her church,—if paid so well as that? Besides, the priest bade her do it, and who could do wrong when obeying a priest?

"Go!" said he, with fiendish glee. "Take oil and fill a cloth with it, and put it in the hall. Put another in the basement, and lock 'em in. There's bars on the back windows. They'll never get out. Go! The saints pertect ye. Ye'll do the will o' the Holy Mary!"

He pushed her from the room, and she departed to slink into a dark alley to nurture her diabolical plan, and to watch the building she was bidden to burn.

"He wants me to lock 'em in," she said, with a malicious grin. "Guess I'll go in an' get de keys."

Rossi, Madison, and Terry were with the women and the dying child. The Mission was dark, save the one room in which the child

lay. It was nearly midnight, but the doors below were open because of the heat.

Tess had awakened now, and seemed stronger, for she spoke aloud. Pointing to Veronica, she looked at Margaret and said: —

"I go to Jesus soon. I can't love her any more."

"We will love her, Tessie, do not fear. We will take care of her," answered Margaret.

But now the pain returned, and the child writhed in agony. When the paroxysm had passed, and she was still again, she asked wearily: —

"Won't you bring me somet'ing? Oh, I wants somet'ing so much!"

"What is it, Tess? What do you want?"

"Oh, I don't know. Maybe it's de dress. Won't you bring de dress again,—de dress I made in de school?"

Lillian hastened away, and returning, laid the dress in the child's hands. For a moment the little eyes brightened, and she touched the soft folds lovingly, and lay with her gaze fixed upon it.. And then she turned from it, and looked up at Margaret with piteous, pleading eyes.

"O no, it's not dat. I wants somet'ing else. Say de 'Wounded' for me,—de 'Wounded for our transgressions.'"

Margaret repeated the scripture slowly and softly, though with an aching heart. When it was finished the child said quickly: —

"Dat's it. Dat's wot I want. Say it again."

Again she repeated it, and yet again, and the child lay still, a peaceful smile upon her lips.

A long time she lay thus, and then she suddenly started up, and looked far off, as if fixing her eyes upon some scene away and distant from the watcher's view.

She watched it breathlessly, and seemed to see it drawing nearer. Suddenly she called out in tones loud and clear, and vibrant with the joy of a conqueror: —

"I didn't,—I didn't pray to Mary,—only to Jesus. It's all right."

She sank back slowly, but still watched that wondrous scene and her eyes were full of holy triumph.

And then, softly as morning beams, a smile of ineffable peace dawned on her face.

"Jesus!" she whispered, lifting up her hands in welcome,—and was gone.

A dark figure crept stealthily through the hall. It hesitated and listened. It heard only sobs and lamentations, and passed on to its

deadly work. It lifted the iron ladder from the wall, and hid it, yet no one saw it come or go, or guessed at a plan so diabolical.

The women moved back and forth in the little chamber, preparing the dead for its last resting-place; but the figure passed into the street, and closed the doors and fastened them, and laughed in malicious glee.

The women still labored on at their merciful task. The child was robed; the little limbs were composed for their last long sleep; the blue eyes closed only to open again on the glad resurrection morn. And the mourning friends stood about the dead and strove to comfort the bereaved father.

Suddenly from the street rose a cry,—a cry of alarm,—a shout of fire,—a swift, sudden, terror-smiting cry! The startled watchers turned,—a great glare of flame,—a wall of fire stood up against them. Rossi and Madison rushed forward.

"The Mission is on fire!" cried Rossi.

The flames leaped up, and reflected their light from window to window.

"Run for the ladder! This way,—come," called Madison, guiding the women.

But Rossi turned them back.

"The ladder is gone," he said.

They looked at one another with blanched faces. Patrick had plunged down the stairs, but he now returned.

"Every door is locked," he said. Some one has shut us in."

"It is the Catholics!" moaned Veronica. "And it is for my sake. They will kill you for saving the child and me."

"Then we will die together willingly," said heroic Margaret.

"Is there no way to reach the scuttle?" cried Madison.

"No," said Rossi, "it is thirty feet above us."

"Will not some one rescue us? Does no one know we are here?" asked Lillian.

Rossi rushed to the organ.

"I will play," he said, hoarsely. "Perhaps they will hear us and help us."

The organ pealed forth a loud, discordant cry. Outside a crowd had gathered, and the startled people turned to one another with horrified faces.

"De Mish'ners is dere," they cried. "De Mish'ners! De Mish'ners!"

Again through the roar of the flames came the shrill peal of the organ.

"Dey no can get out," moaned the crowd. "Who can go in dere to save dem?"

Madison and Patrick had drawn the women to the windows and bound wet cloths about their faces, but Margaret begged to go to her husband.

"Who will help de Mish'ners?" again sobbed the crowd, and the organ called back to them peal upon peal.

"Can no one go to de Mish'ners?" The people were frenzied now, and some pushed forward; but who could penetrate that wall of fire?

Again the organ cried to them. It thundered its alarm,—it pleaded for the lives of men and of women. It rose like a mighty trumpet above the roar of the flames and the crash of falling timber. It struck terror to the hearts of the crowd, and called out its judgment on the murderers.

And then, in merciful relief, the rattle of engines was heard, and fire fighters dashed into their midst, and hose was laid and a tower run up.

And through the noise of clatter and shouting and the awful shriek of the flames came again that peal,—the peal of the organ,—high and clear, like a mighty bell, pleading for the lives of the prisoned ones.

And then help came, and blows were heard, and the roof was opened, and a ladder—a merciful ladder—was let down, and strong arms seized the stifled, motionless women and the unconscious men, and lifted them into the blessed air again.

But the organ was still, and the gallant player lay beside it,—dead.

A fireman plunged down again for him, but his comrades drew him back, for the wall of flame was upon them, and already its tongues licked the rounds of the ladder, and burst into their faces. And they turned back and fought the fire, and poured on water in rushing torrents, and prayed that God would spare the noble leader of men.

At their onslaught the fierce flames fell back, and choked and sputtered angrily. They reared up again, and received their blow, and fell back to hiss, and groan, and die.

When their fury was spent, grave faces searched among the ruins, and found the child and her friend beside his organ, both untouched by the flames, both sleeping the last long sleep of those who wait for the resurrection morn.

CHAPTER XVI.

Upon Margaret the blow fell with crushing force. She had loved her husband with all the power of her affectionate nature, and he had shown an equal devotion to her. It seemed doubly bitter that their walk together must be broken off so early, and she, the weaker of the twain, be left to complete the earthly journey alone. But Margaret's deep religious faith proved now the source of her strength, and in the hour of her grievous trial she endured nobly, submitting to the Almighty's will. From the depths of her own anguish she comforted and upheld Patrick, and in pointing his faltering faith upward, her own soul was strengthened.

Sweet Margaret, true and pure as the pearl her name declared! Even in her bitter sorrow she shone out in the beauty of her God, and men saw and praised the power that could give such victory.

For Tess they prepared a grave by the side of Juan Miro, for the Protestants had buried him.

For Rossi, his father's mausoleum was opened, and its iron gate swung just beyond the children's graves.

A great crowd followed that august funeral. The city was moved. Many dressed their homes in mourning, and followed those two to their graves, and deemed that they had buried martyrs.

All day, at the stately church, on the slow march through the city's streets, even at the grave's foot, was heard this muttered warning: "To-day we bury! To-morrow—to morrow we vote!"

It came from the tongues of men who had long opposed the foreign church, and graver still, it came from the tongues of those who had been her votaries. It trembled on every lip in that solemn assemblage, and it made the cheeks of corrupt men blanch with fear.

When they returned from the cemetery, the multitude halted upon the greensward of a city park, and a statesman, well-chosen for his oratory, stepped out before them and spoke. He poured out words that were vibrant with power, which kindled anew the flames of patriotism in every breast. The loyalty of each heart was touched, and men went back to their avocations with the deep determination to uphold their country's institutions, and to maintain her liberties at whatever cost, even at the price of their own lives, if necessary. They would give their blood as Rossi had given his, freely, generously, lovingly.

And as they went, the saying spread again from lip to lip, and from a murmur it became a cry, and grew into a chorus, and swelled into one great shout, until it filled the city. And this was the cry:


"BACK....
TO THE OLD DAYS"
T. Pym.

"To-day we bury! To-morrow we vote!" "To-day we bury! To-morrow we vote!"

CHAPTER XVII.

At the beginning of the fire which destroyed Rossi's Mission and ended his life, policemen found a woman skulking in an alley near the building. She was carried to the station-house, and there oil-soaked rags were found on her, and a quantity of matches. She carried a gold piece in her shoe, and when they questioned her about it she said she earned it, but refused to tell what work she had done to bring such a valuable reward.

At last, terrified by her imprisonment, she confessed her guilt, and stoutly averred that the priest, O'Hara, had bidden her to do it, and given her the gold piece as her pay.

But the confession, startling as it was, did not excuse her from suffering the full penalty of her crime, and she was eventually sentenced to life imprisonment.

As for O'Hara, when the officers went to arrest him, he had fled, nor was he ever seen again by any resident of Bay City.

Vosche also disappeared, and was heard of no more. Indignation ran high against the convent, but public sentiment was not then strong enough to mete out to the nunnery its just due, and the superior went unpunished.

That the events had a profound influence upon the election, goes without saying. Everywhere, good men, irrespective of former party affiliations, repudiated the actions of the priests, by a vote against the party with which the hierarchy was allied, and instead of being a help to the Falenites, because of the re-awakened patriotism and the opening of long-blind eyes to a great danger, these Romish allies became the mlil-stone which dragged the Falenites to political death.

The election went to the Pure Government party by overwhelming majorities. All but the wards in which the foreigners predominated, voted for the new administration, but those wards, even Ward B, cast their naturalized vote solidly for the Falenite candidates, and in every instance outnumbered their opponents by so much as the foreigners outnumbered the Americans. The only exceptions to this rule were the converted Italians in Ward B. Thus

was seen in one tremendous object lesson, the folly of bestowing the franchise upon a people whose loyalty to their church precluded loyalty to their government.

Rossi's Mission was rebuilt by popular subscription, and offered to the widow as the city's monument to her husband's memory. The Pure Government Club maintained its organization, and inaugurated a patriotic society for the young men, giving them each year a course of lectures in American history and the science of government. They still hope that Ward B may write its majorities on the other side of the slate.

To the astonishment of every one, Villars and his wife adopted Micky Healy, and are making a man of him. Wendell secured the position of matron in a children's home for Mrs. Duane, and considers it the best thing that ever happened to the Home. George is therefore able to attend school regularly, and is happy in the prospect of going to college next year, since his mother will not need his care for the present.

Paulo and Tony have attended the public school for several years, and they have petitioned their fathers to allow them to enter the city college when they have graduated from the high school. They argue that this is what George is going to do, and since they have applied themselves faithfully to their studies thus far, the prospect of attaining their end is good.

When O'Hara disappeared so suddenly, Dennis' faith received a rude shock. To put it in Dennis' language, the man had lost his pull,—a thing before unthinkable of O'Hara,—and to Dennis the man who had lost his pull was the most forsaken man in the universe. Then, too, the memory of his suffering sister, and her last sad words to him, "It's so hard to be a Cat'olic," rankled sharply in his mind. When his father came again to claim him, Dennis therefore took off his waiter's apron and went with him without remonstrance. Patrick sent him at once to school, and has at last had the joy of seeing him become a worthy son

Ted was left with Margaret Rossi until Patrick married again. The new wife proved to be a sensible, motherly woman, who took the boy to her heart, and so Ted's life promises to be a happy one. But Patrick's grief for his dead daughter was never fully assuaged. There are some sorrows that cannot be cured here. Only in heaven, when we clasp again to our breasts those we have loved so well, and see in their eyes the light of eternal joy, can we be satisfied. Very often he visits the tiny grave in the shadow of the great mausoleum, and his aching heart finds comfort in the nearness of the precious dust.

Tess is not forgotten. A monument of purest marble rises above her grave, and in the Mission a window, in which a fair-haired, blue-eyed child stands beckoning the looker upward, is dedicated to her memory.

As for Margaret, before the snow fell that autumn of her husband's death, a babe lay on her breast, a dark-eyed son, so like his father that her dead seemed to speak to her through him,—and she was comforted. She lives peacefully on in the beautiful old home, still filling her life with unselfish deeds and loving charities.

To learn of Lillian we shall need to go back to a time shortly after the burning of the Mission. Many thoughts had come to Lillian's mind during that troubled summer, and not the least of them was a growing distrust of herself. Madison's face, serene and noble, seemed always before her. Had he been dejected or morose, she would have held him in contempt. Had he forgotten her, her pride might have been piqued. But this simple uplifting of the man,—his growing spiritual power, the patient mastery of his sorrow, touched the deepest springs of her heart. Here was a man among men, and she reverenced him. Unconsciously she grew jealous of him. She wished he were indeed hers, and hers only.

But it was not until the night of the fire that the scales entirely fell from her eyes. And when she at last saw the matter in its true light, her resolve was taken.

Madison called one night to confer with Margaret, and with her own frank courage, Lillian came to him and said, although with many tremors:—

"Howell, I have been wrong in my opinion about my own life. God has shown it to me."

It was hard to say, but she pushed on bravely.

"When we stood that night in the Mission with those flames about us, everything seemed different to me. Life was so solemn a thing, so holy, I felt I dared not put my hand to one of God's purposes I felt that I was only safe in submitting to His guidance in everything. It was as if scales had fallen from my eyes, and I saw that I had been proud and vain of my service. Before I had believed that nothing was so great as the sacrifice of service. Now I know that obedience is greater. I mean from now on to let God lead me in every event of my life, and to do what He wishes, not what may seem right to me."

"Do you mean, dear Lillian, that you will listen to me now? May I hope that you will yet love me,—that you will be my wife?"

He had taken her hands in his, and looked into her face with searching, pleading eyes.

"If you want me," she whispered, tremblingly, and he folded her close to his breast.

"Ah, love," he answered, "the waiting has been hard to bear, but the blessing is all the sweeter now because I yielded it up, as Abraham yielded Isaac. You are indeed my own now, for the Lord Himself has given you to me. Blessed be His name!"

Would you like to know what became of Veronica? She lived in Madison's home for three happy years, the companion of his mother, and Lillian Madison's dearest friend. Her white cheeks grew fair and rounded. The sad lines gave way, and a quiet happiness shone from her eyes. In the transforming truths of Tessie's beloved Book, she found peace of mind and soul, and forgot the old misery and despair.

By-and-by another claimed her affection, and she was married from Madison's house, and went away to make her own happy home.

And thus we leave them all. Adieu.

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